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PORTRAIT OF RILEY, BY SARGENT

THE
POCKET UNIVERSITY

VOLUME VIII PART I

AMERICAN WIT AND HUMOR

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ROBERT JONES BURDETTE

THE VACATION OP MUSTAPHA

NOW in the sixth month, in the reign of the good Caliph, it was so that Mustapha said, "I am wearied with much work; thought, care and worry have worn me out; I need repose, for the hand of exhaustion is upon me, and death even now lieth at the door."

And he called his physician, who felt of his pulse and looked upon his tongue and said:

"Twodollahs!" (For this was the oath by which all physicians swore.) "Of a verity thou must have rest. Flee unto the valley of quiet, and close thine eyes in dreamful rest; hold back thy brain from thought and thy hand from labor, or you will be a candidate for the asylum in three weeks."

And he heard him, and went out, and put the business in the hands of the clerk, and went away to rest in the valley of quiet. And he went to his Uncle Ben's, whom he had not seen for lo! these fourteen years. Now, his Uncle Ben was a farmer, and abode in the valley of rest, and the mountains of repose rose round about him. And he was rich, and well favored, and strong as an ox, and healthy as an onion crop. Ofttimes he boasted to his

neighbors that there was not a lazy bone in his body, and he swore that he hated a lazy man.

And Mustapha wist not that it was so.

But when he reached his Uncle Ben's they received him with great joy, and placed before him a supper of homely viands well cooked, and piled up on his plate like the wreck of a box-car. And when he could not eat all, they laughed him to scorn.

And after supper they sat up with him and talked with him about relatives whereof he had never, in all his life, so much as heard. And he answered their questions at random, and lied unto them, professing to know Uncle Ezra and Aunt Bethesda, and once he said that he had a letter from Uncle George last week.

Now they all knew that Uncle George was shot in a neighbor's sheep-pen three years ago, but Mustapha wist not that it was so, and he was sleepy, and only talked to fill up the time. And then they talked politics to him, and he hated politics. So about one o'clock in the morning they sent him to bed.

Now the spare room wherein he slept was right under the roof, and there were ears and bundles of ears of seed corn hung from the rafters; and he bunged his eyes with the same, and he hooked his chin in festoons of dried apples, and shook dried herbs and seeds down his back as he walked along, for it was dark. And when he sat up in bed in the night he ran a scythe in his ear.

And it was so that the four boys slept with him, for the bed was wide. And they were restless, and slumbered crosswise and kicked, so that Mustapha slope not a wink that night, neither closed he his eyes.

And about the fourth hour after midnight his Uncle Ben smote him on the back and spake unto him, saying:

"Awake, arise, rustle out of this and wash your face, for the liver and bacon are fried and the breakfast waiteth. You will find the well down at the other end of the cow-lot. Take a towel with you."

When they had eaten, his Uncle Ben spake unto him, saying, "Come, let us stroll around the farm."

And they walked about eleven miles. And his Uncle Ben sat him upon a wagon and taught him how to load hay. Then they drove into the barn, and he taught him how to unload it. Then they girded up their loins and walked four miles, even into the forest, and his Uncle Ben taught him how to chop wood, and then walked back to supper. And the morning and the evening were the first day, and Mustapha wished that he were dead.

And after supper his Uncle Ben spoke once more, and said: "Come, let us have some fun." And so they hooked up a team and drove nine miles, down to Belcher's Ranch, where there was a hop. And they danced until the second hour in the morning.

When the next day was come — which wasn't long, for already the night was far spent—his Uncle Ben took him out and taught him how to make rail fence. And that night there was a wedding, and they danced, and made merry, and drank, and ate, and when they went to bed at three o'clock, Mustapha prayed that death might come to him before breakfast time. But breakfast had an early start, and got there first. And his Uncle Ben took him down to the creek, and taught him how to wash and shear sheep. And when evening was come they went to spelling-school, and they got home at the first hour after midnight, and Uncle Ben marveled that it was so early. And he lighted his pipe, and sat up for an hour and told Mustapha all about the forty acres he bought last spring of old Mosey Stringer, to finish out that north half, and about the new colt that was foaled last spring.

And when Mustapha went to bed that morning he bethought himself of a dose of strychnine he had with him, and he said his prayers wearily, and he took it. But the youngest boy was restless that night, and kicked all the poison out of him in less than ten seconds.

And in the morning, while it was yet night, they ate breakfast. And his Uncle Ben took him out and taught him how to dig a ditch.

And when evening was come there was a revival meeting at Ebenezer Methodist Church; they all went. And there were three regular

preachers and two exhorters, and a Baptist evangelist. And when midnight was come, they went home and sat up and talked over the meeting until it was bedtime.

Now, when Mustapha was at home, he left his desk at the fifth hour in the afternoon, and he went to bed at the third hour after sunset, and he arose not until the sun was high in the heavens.

So the next day, when his Uncle Ben would take him out into the field and show him how to make a post-and-rail fence, Mustapha would swear at him and smote him with an ax-helve and fled, and got himself home.

And Mustapha sent for his physician and cursed him. And he said he was tired to death; he turned his face to the wall and died. So Mustapha was gathered to his fathers.

And his physician and his friends mourned and said, "Alas, he did not rest soon enough. He tarried at his desk too long."

But his Uncle Ben, who came in to attend the funeral, and had to do all his weeping out of one eye, because the other was blacked half way down to his chin, said it was a pity, but Mustapha was too awfully lazy to live, and he had no get-up about him.

But Mustapha wist not what they said, because he was dead. So they divided his property among them, and said if he wanted a tombstone he might have attended to it himself, while he was yet alive, because they had no time. —*Burlington Hawkeye.*

THE GREAT AMERICAN TRAVELER

"Excuse me," said the man with side whiskers, as he turned to the passenger on the seat behind him, "but I heard you speaking of Europe awhile ago. You have been there, I take it?"

"Yes, sir," was the reply.

"And I am on my way to New York to take a steamer to London. Were you in London?"

"Oh, yes."

"How much of London can I see in two days?"

"A mile or two, I should say."

"A mile or two — that will do first rate," said the side-whiskered man as he took out pencil and note-book. "How long should you think I ought to stay in Paris?"

"From eight in the morning to six in the evening, at least. In that time you can see at least four blocks of Paris."

"Thanks! Four blocks—ten hours. Good! Is the tomb of the great Napoleon at Paris?"

"Of course not."

"Glad of that. If it was I should feel obliged to go and see it, and it always gives me the headache to look at tombs. I am told that I ought to go to Rome. Anything special to see in Rome?"

"A few ruins, I believe," replied the man who had been there.

"Then I shall skip Rome. Half of my town burned up last year, and there's no end of ruins to be seen right at home. I've seen the track of a cyclone, too, and you can't beat that for slivers and splinters and ruins. I'll find Switzerland over there somewhere, I suppose?"

"Yes, if you make inquiries."

"I've been told to take it in. Most all mountains, I believe. How long had I ought to be doing Switzerland?"

"At least a couple of hours."

"I can give it half a day if I find it interesting. I've got it down here to go to Naples, and to go from Naples to Vesuvius. Vesuvius is a volcano, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"I never saw one, and don't know as I care to. We had the biggest spring freshet in the Wabash this year known since 1848, and a man who has seen seven houses and barns floating down a river all at once can't feel knocked out at sight of a volcano. How's Venice?"

"It was all right when I was there, though most of the people had the grip. You ought to put in a full day in Venice."

"Half a day is all I can spare, and I shall spend most of that in a gondola. Europe, taken altogether, is quite a country, isn't it?"

"Yes, a pretty fair country."

"A man who hustles along can see most of it in three weeks, can't he?"

"He ought to."

"Well, I'm going to give it three weeks, and perhaps an extra day or two, and then scoot back here, and if my going abroad don't knock the other grocers in my town galley west I'll put the price of eggs down to ten cents a dozen and hold 'em down till I have got to go into bankruptcy! Thanks, sir; I've got it all down here — Europe—Rome—Naples —Venice — three weeks — no tombs — git up and dust and get back home again. Come into the smoker and have a nickel cigar with me."

Soon after the death of Jay Gould, Robinson was trying to instil into his youngest the moral of money-getting. The little fellow sat on his father's knee and listened intently.

"Now, Ralph, my boy, here are two men typical of this generation, Gould and George W. Childs. The one made riches his god, and sacrificed everything, even life, to the search for wealth. The other won his wealth through honorable exertions, and uses his riches to make people happier and nobler. Now, which would my boy rather be?"

Ralph thought.

"Childs," he answered.

Robinson gazed lovingly at the youngster. "Ah, that's my own boy," he said. "Now, why would you rather be Childs?"

"'Cause he ain't dead."

CANDOR

OCTOBER—A WOOD

"I KNOW what you're going to say," she said,
And she rose up looking uncommonly tall;
"You are going to speak of the hectic fall,
And say you're sorry the summer's dead.
And no other summer was like it, you know,
And can I imagine what made it so?
Now aren't you, honestly?" "Yes," I said.

"I know what you're going to say," she said;
"You are going to ask if I forgot
That day in June when the woods were wet,
And you carried me"—here she dropped her head—
"Over the creek; you are going to say,
Do I remember that horrid day.
Now aren't you, honestly?" "Yes," I said.

"I know what you're going to say," she said:
"You are going to say that since that time
You have rather tended to run to rhyme,
And"—her clear glance fell and her cheek grew red—
"And have I noticed your tone was queer?—
Why, everybody has seen it here!—
Now, aren't you, honestly?" "Yes," I said.

"I know what you're going to say," I said;
"You're going to say you've been much annoyed,
And I'm short of tact—you will say devoid—
And I'm clumsy and awkward, and call me Ted,
And I bear abuse like a dear old lamb,
And you'll have me, anyway, just as I am.
Now aren't you, honestly?" "Ye-es," she said.

H. C. BUNNER.

—*Airs from Arcady and Elsewhere.*

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"The complaint of the farmer is proverbial," said a gentleman recently, "and a season in which he would not be able to find some cause for it would be extremely rare. I have just come from the West, where I have had occasion to visit a great number of farming districts, and I must say I have never seen such crops as they are having there this year. One farmer was showing me the result of fine growing weather and superior skill in cultivating when I said to him:

"'Well, you ought to be satisfied with such crops as these. There is certainly nothing lacking. You have no cause for complaint this year.'

"The old farmer scratched his head and stood in a meditative mood for a moment, then hesitatingly replied, 'Well, you know, such crops as these is pesky hard on the soil.'"

THE FRENCHMAN'S VERSION

Le Monsieur Adam vake from hees nap une
fine day,
In ze beautiful gardaine and see
Une belle demoiselle fast asleep, and he say,
"Voila, la chance! here ees something zat may
Be mooch interesting to me."

Ven he open hees eye to admire ze view,
Viz her fan madame covaire her face;
Zen monsieur to madame say, "*Bon jour; voulez
vous*,
Go for une promenade?" And zey valk out,
ze two,
In zat very mooch beautiful place.

Vhere Monsieur le Serpent he sit in ze tree,
Zey come, and ze madame she cry—
"Oh, Monsieur le Serpent, *voulez vous* not have
ze
Bonte for to peek some fine apple for me?"
"*Certainement!*" ze serpent reply.

"Hold, hold, *mon ami!*" zen Monsieur Adam
speak,
"Vat madness ees zis? Don't you know
It ees wrong to eat from ze tree vich you seek?"
But ze snake in ze branches ees pretty and sleek,
And he smile on ze madame below.

"Oh, Monsieur Adam! vat you say is not true.
For do you not know," say ze snake,
"Zere ees notting vatevaire prohibited to
Ze ladies? Madame, let me offaire to you
Ze fruit." And ze madame she take.

Une curtsey she make; zen ze serpent he fill
Her apron viz apples and say,
"Monsieur Adam, eat of zis fruit, zin you vill
Be vise like un god; know ze good and ze ill;
Ze tings of ze night and ze day.

"But as for ze lady she nevaire could be—"
Here ze snake make hees grandest salaam—
"More lak une vise, beautiful goddess," say he
(And smiling and bowing his sweetest), "zan she
Ees now!" And zat fineesh madame.

At the wedding anniversary of a railway magnate, one of the guests, noticing a somewhat lonely looking and rather shabbily attired man in one corner of the parlor, walked over and sat down near him.

"I was introduced to you," said he, "but I did not catch your name."

"My name," replied the other, "is Swaddleford."

"Oh, then, you are a relative of our host?"

"Yes," rejoined the "poor relation," with a grin, "I am his cousin, five hundred thousand dollars removed."

KATHERINE KENT CHILD WALKER

THE TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF INANIMATE THINGS

I AM confident that, at the annunciation of my theme, Andover, Princeton and Cambridge will skip like rams, and the little hills of East Windsor, Meadville and Fairfax, like lambs. However divinity schools may refuse to "skip" in unison, and may butt and batter each other about the doctrine and origin of *human* depravity, all will join devoutly in the *credo*, I believe in the total depravity of inanimate things.

The whole subject lies in a nutshell, or, rather, an apple-skin. We have clerical authority for affirming that all its miseries were let loose upon the human race by "them greenin's" tempting our mother to curious pomological speculations; and from that time till now—Longfellow, thou reasonest well!—"things are not what they seem," but are diabolically otherwise—masked batteries, nets, gins, and snares of evil.

(In this connection I am reminded of—can I ever cease to remember?—the unlucky lecturer at our lyceum a few winters ago, who, on rising to address his audience, applauding him all the while most vehemently, pulled out

his handkerchief, for oratorical purposes only, and inadvertently flung from his pocket three "Baldwins" that a friend had given to him on his way to the hall, straight into the front row of giggling girls.)

My zeal on this subject received new impetus recently from an exclamation which pierced the thin partitions of the country parsonage, once my home, where I chanced to be a guest.

From the adjoinng dressing-room issued a prolonged "Y-ah!"—not the howl of a spoiled child, nor the protest of a captive gorilla, but the whole-souled utterance of a mighty son of Anak, whose amiability is invulnerable to weapons of human aggravation.

I paused in the midst of toilet exigencies, and listened sympathetically, for I recognized the probable presence of the old enemy to whom the bravest and sweetest succumb.

Confirmation and explanation followed speedily in the half apologetic, wholly wrathful declaration—"The pitcher was made foolish in the first place." I dare affirm that, if the spirit of Lindley Murray himself were at that moment hovering over that scene of trial, he dropped a tear, or, better still, an adverbial *ly* upon the false grammar, and blotted it out forever.

I comprehended the scene at once. I had been there. I felt again the remorseless swash of the water over neat boots and immaculate hose; I saw the perverse intricacies of its mean-

derings over the carpet, upon which the "foolish" pitcher had been confidingly deposited; I knew, beyond the necessity of ocular demonstration, that, as sure as there were "pipe-holes" or cracks in the ceiling of the study below, those inaminate things would inevitably put their evil heads together and bring to grief the long-suffering Dominie, with whom, during my day, such inundations had been of at least bi-weekly occurrence, instigated by crinoline. The inherent wickedness of that "thing of beauty" will be acknowledged by all mankind, and by every female not reduced to the deplorable poverty of the heroine of the following veracious anecdote.

A certain good bishop, on making a tour of inspection through a mission-school of his diocese, was so impressed by the aspect of all its beneficiaries that his heart overflowed with joy, and he exclaimed to a little maiden whose appearance was particularly suggestive of creature-comforts—"Why, my little girl! you have everything that heart can wish, haven't you?" Imagine the bewilderment and horror of the prelate, when the miniature Flora McFlimsey drew down the corners of her mouth lugubriously, and sought to accommodate the puffs and dimples of her fat little body to an expression of abject misery, as she replied: "No, indeed, sir! I haven't got any—skeleton!"

We who have suffered know the disposition of graceless "skeletons" to hang themselves

on "foolish" pitchers, bureau-knobs, rockers, cobblestones, splinters, nails, and, indeed, any projection a tenth of a line beyond a dead level.

The mention of nails is suggestive of voluminous distresses. Country parsonages, from some inexplicable reason, are wont to bristle all over with these impish assailants of human comfort.

I never ventured to leave my masculine relatives to their own devices for more than twenty-four consecutive hours, that I did not return to find that they had seemingly manifested their grief at my absence after the old Hebraic method ("more honored in the breach than the observance"), by rending their garments. When summoned to their account, the invariable defense has been a vehement denunciation of some particular *nail* as the guilty cause of my woes.

By the way, O Christian woman of the nineteenth century, did it ever enter your heart to give devout thanks that you did not share the woe of those whose fate it was to "sojourn in Mesech and dwell in the tents of Kedar"? that it did not fall to your lot to do the plain sewing and mending for some Jewish patriarch, or prophet of yore?

Realize, if you can, the masculine aggravation and the feminine long-suffering of a period when the head of a family could neither go downtown, nor even sit at his tent-door, without

descrying some wickedness in high places, some insulting placard, some exasperating war-bulletin, some offensive order from headquarters, which caused him to transform himself instantly into an animated ragbag. Whereas, in these women-saving days, similar grievances send President Abraham into his cabinet to issue a proclamation, the Reverend Jeremiah into his pulpit with a scathing homily, Poet-Laureate David to the *Atlantic* with a burning lyric, and Major-General Joab to the privacy of his tent, there to calm his perturbed spirit with Drake's Plantation Bitters. In humble imitation of another, I would state that this indorsement of the potency of a specific is entirely gratuitous, and that I am stimulated thereto by no remuneration, fluid or otherwise.

Blessed be this day of sewing machines for women and of safety-valves and innocent explosives for their lords!

But this is a digression.

I woke up very early in life to the consciousness that I held the doctrine which we are considering.

On a hapless day, when I was perhaps five-years old, I was, in my own estimation, intrusted with the family dignity, when I was deposited for the day at the house of a lordly Pharisee of the parish, with solemnly repeated instructions in table manners and the like.

One who never analyzed the mysteries of a

sensitive child's heart cannot appreciate the sense of awful responsibility which oppressed me during that visit. But all went faultlessly for a time. I corrected myself instantly each time I said, "Yes, ma'am," to Mr. Simon, and "No, sir," to Madam, which was as often as I addressed them; I clenched little fists and lips resolutely, that they might not touch, taste, handle, tempting *bijouterie*. I even held in check the spirit of inquiry rampant within me, and indulged myself with only one question to every three minutes of time.

At last I found myself at the handsome dinner-table, triumphantly mounted upon two "Comprehensive Commentaries" and a dictionary, fearing no evil from the viands before me. Least of all did I suspect the vegetables of guile. But deep in the heart of a bland, mealy mouthed potato lurked cruel designs upon my fair reputation.

No sooner had I, in the most approved style of nursery good-breeding, applied my fork to its surface, than the hard-hearted thing executed a wild *pirouette* before my astonished eyes, and then flew on impish wings across the room, dashing out its malicious brains, I am happy to say, against the parlor door, but leaving me in a half-comatose state, stirred only by vague longings for a lodge with a "proud Korah's troop," whose destination is unmistakably set forth in the "Shorter Catechism."

There is a possibility that I inherited my

innate distrust of things from my maternal grandmother, whose holy horror at the profanity they once provoked from a bosom friend in her childhood was still vivid in her old age.

It was on this wise: When still a pretty Puritan maiden, my grandame was tempted irresistibly by the spring sunshine to the tabooed indulgence of a Sunday walk. The temptation was probably intensified by the presence of the British troops, giving unwonted fascination to village promenades. Her confederate in this guilty pleasure was a like-minded little saint; so there was a tacit agreement between them that their transgression should be sanctified by a strict adherence to religious topics of conversation. Accordingly they launched boldly upon the great subject which was just then agitating church circles in New England.

Fortune smiled upon these criminals against the Blue Laws, until they encountered a wall surmounted by hickory rails. Without intermitting the discussion, Susannah sprang agilely up. Quoth she, balancing herself for one moment upon the summit—"No, no, Betsey, *I* believe God is the author of sin!" The next, she sprang toward the ground; but a salient splinter, a chip of depravity, clutched her Sunday gown, and converted her, incontinently, it seems, into a confessor of the opposing faith; for history records that, following the above-mentioned dogma, there came from hitherto unstained lips—"The Devil!"

Time and space would, of course, be inadequate to the enumeration of all the demonstrations of the truth of the doctrine of the absolute depravity of things. A few examples only can be cited.

There is melancholy pleasure in the knowledge that a great soul has gone mourning before me in the path I am now pursuing. It was only to-day that, in glancing over the pages of Victor Hugo's greatest work, I chanced upon the following: "Everyone will have noticed with what skill a coin let fall upon the ground runs to hide itself, and what art it has in rendering itself invisible; there are thoughts which play us the same trick," etc., etc.

The similar tendency of pins and needles is universally understood and execrated—their base secretiveness when searched for, and their incensing intrusion when one is off guard.

I know a man whose sense of their malignity is so keen that, whenever he catches a gleam of their treacherous lustre on the carpet, he instantly draws his two and a quarter yards of length into the smallest possible compass, and shrieks until the domestic police come to the rescue, and apprehend the sharp little villains. Do not laugh at this. Years ago he lost his choicest friend by the stab of just such a little dastard lying in ambush.

So, also, every wielder of the needle is familiar with the propensity of the several parts of a garment in the process of manufacture to turn

themselves wrong side out, and down side up; and the same viciousness cleaves like leprosy to the completed garment so long as a thread remains.

My blood still tingles with a horrible memory illustrative of this truth.

Dressing hurriedly and in darkness for a concert one evening, I appealed to the Dominie, as we passed under the hall lamp, for a toilet inspection.

"How do I look, father?"

After a sweeping glance came the candid statement:

"Beau-tifully!"

Oh, the blessed glamour which invests a child whose father views her "with a critic's eye!"

"Yes, *of course;* but look carefully, please; how is my dress?"

Another examination of apparently severest scrutiny.

"All right, dear! That's the new cloak, is it? Never saw you look better. Come, we shall be late."

Confidingly I went to the hall; confidingly I entered; since the concert-room was crowded with rapt listeners to the Fifth Symphony, I, gingerly, but still confidingly, followed the author of my days, and the critic of my toilet, to the very uppermost seat, which I entered, barely nodding to my finically fastidious friend, Guy Livingston, who was seated near us with

a stylish looking stranger, who bent eyebrows and glass upon me superciliously.

Seated, the Dominie was at once lifted in the midst of the massive harmonies of the *adagio;* I lingered outside a moment in order to settle my garments and—that woman's look. What! was that a partially suppressed titter near me! Ah! she has no soul for music! How such ill-timed merriment will jar upon my friend's exquisite sensibilities!

Shade of Bethoven! A hybrid cough and laugh, smothered decorously, but still recognizable, from the courtly Guy himself! What can it mean?

In my perturbation my eyes fell, and rested upon the sack whose newness and glorifying effect had been already noticed by my lynx-eyed parent.

I here pause to remark that I had intended to request the compositor to "set up" the coming sentence in explosive capitals, by way of emphasis, but forbear, realizing that it already staggers under the weight of its own significance.

That sack was wrong side out!'

Stern necessity, proverbially known as "the mother of invention," and practically the stepmother of ministers' daughters had made me eke out the silken facings of the front with cambric linings for the back and sleeves. Accordingly, in the full blaze of the concert room, there sat I "accoutered as I was in motley attire—my homely little economies

patent to admiring spectators; on either shoulder, budding wings composed of unequal parts of sarsenet-cambric and cotton-batting; and in my heart—*parricide* I had almost said, but it was rather the more filial sentiment of desire to operate for cataract upon my father's eyes. But a moment's reflection sufficed to transfer my indignation to its proper object, the sinful sack itself, which, concerting with its kindred darkness, had planned this cruel assault upon my innocent pride.

A constitutional obtuseness renders me delightfully insensible to our fruitful source of provocation among inanimate things. I am so dull as to regard all distinctions between "rights" and "lefts" as invidious; but I have witnessed the agonized struggles of many a victim of fractious boots, and been thankful that "I am not as other men are," in ability to comprehend the difference between my right and left foot. Still, as already intimated, I have seen wise men driven mad by a thing of leather and waxed-ends.

A little innocent of three years, in all the pride of his first boots, was aggravated by the perversity of the right to thrust itself on to the left leg, to the utterance of a contraband expletive.

When reproved by his horror-stricken mamma, he maintained a dogged silence.

In order to pierce his apparently indurated conscience, his censor finally said, solemnly:

"Dugald! God knows that you said that wicked word."

"Does He?" cried the baby victim of total depravity, in a tone of relief; "then *He* knows it was a doke" (*Angtice*, joke).

But, mind you, the sin-tempting boot intended no "doke."

The toilet, with its multiform details and complicated machinery, is a demon whose surname is Legion.

Time would fail me to speak of the elusiveness of soap, the knottiness of strings, the transitory nature of buttons, the inclination of suspenders to twist, and of hooks to forsake their lawful eyes and cleave only unto the hairs of their hapless owners' head. (It occurs to me as barely possible that, in the last case, the hooks may be innocent, and the sinfulness may lie in *capillary* attraction.)

And, O my brother or sister in sorrow, has it never befallen you, when bending all your energies to the mighty task of "doing" your back hair, to find yourself gazing inanely at the opaque back of your brush, while the hand-mirror, which had maliciously insinuated itself into your right hand for this express purpose, came down upon your devoted head with a resonant whack?

I have alluded, parenthetically, to the possible guilt of capillary attraction, but I am prepared to maintain against the attraction of gravitation the charge of total depravity.

Indeed, I should say of it, as did the worthy exhorter of the Dominie's old parish in regard to slavery, "It's the wickedest thing in the world, except sin!"

It was only the other day that I saw depicted upon the young divine's countenance, from this cause, thoughts "too deep for tears," and, perchance, too earthly for clerical utterance.

From a mingling of sanitary and economic considerations, he had cleared his own sidewalk after a heavy snowstorm. As he stood leaning upon his shovel, surveying with smiling complacency his accomplished task, the spite of the arch-fiend Gravitation was raised against him, and, finding the impish slates (hadn't Luther something to say about "*as many devils as tiles?*") ready to coöperate, an avalanche was the result, making the last state of that sidewalk worse than the first, and sending the divine into the house with a battered hat, and an Article of Faith supplementary to the orthodox Thirty-Nine.

Prolonged reflection upon a certain class of grievances has convinced me that mankind has generally ascribed them to a guiltless source. I refer to the unspeakable aggravation of "typographical errors," rightly so-called—for, in nine cases out of ten, I opine it is the types themselves which err.

I appeal to fellow-sufferers if the substitutions and false combinations of letters are not often altogether too absurd for humanity.

Take as one instance the experience of a friend who, in writing in all innocency of a session of the Historical Society, affirmed mildly in manuscript, "All went smoothly," but weeks after was made to declare in blatant print, "All went *snoringly!*"

As among men, so in the alphabet, one sinner destroyeth much good.

The genial Senator from the Granite Hills told me of an early aspiration of his own for literary distinction which was beheaded remorselessly by a villain of this type. By way of majestic peroration to a pathetic article, he had exclaimed, "For what would we exchange the fame of Washington?"—referring, I scarcely need say, to the man of fragrant memory, and not to the odorous capital. The black-hearted little dies, left to their own devices one night, struck dismay to the heart of the aspirant author by propounding in black and white a prosaic inquiry as to what would be considered a fair equivalent for the *farm* of the Father of his Country!

Among frequent instances of this depravity in my own experience, a flagrant example still shows its ugly front on a page of a child's book. In the latest edition of "Our Little Girls" (good Mr. Randolph, pray read, mark, learn and inwardly digest), there occurs a description of a christening, wherein a venerable divine is made to dip "his *head*" into the consecrating water, and lay it upon the child.

Disembodied words are also sinners and the occasions of sin. Who has not broken the Commandments in consequence of the provocation of some miserable little monosyllable eluding his grasp in the moment of his direct need, or of some impertinent interloper thrusting itself in, to the utter demoralization of his well-organized sentences? Who has not been covered with shame at tripping over the pronunciation of some perfectly simple word like "statistics," "inalienable," "inextricable," etc.?

Whose experience will not empower him to sympathize with that unfortunate invalid who, on being interrogated by a pious visitor in regard to her enjoyment of means of grace, informed the horror-stricken inquisitor, "I have not been to church for years, I have been such an *infidel*"; and then, moved by a dim impression of wrong somewhere, as well as by the evident shock inflicted upon her worthy visitor, but conscious of her own integrity, repeated still more emphatically: "No; I have been a confirmed infidel for years."

But a peremptory summons from an animated nursery forbids my lingering longer in this fruitful field. I can only add one instance of corroborating testimony from each member of the circle originating this essay.

The Dominie *loq.*—"Shan't have anything to do with it! It's a wicked thing! To be sure, I do remember, when I was a little boy, I used to throw stones at the chip-basket when

it upset the cargo I had just laded, and it was a great relief to my feelings, too. Besides, you've told stories about me which were anything but true. I don't remember anything about that sack."

Lady Visitor *loq.*—"The first time I was invited to Mr. ——'s (the Hon. ——'s, you know), I was somewhat anxious but went home flattering myself I had made a creditable impression. Imagine my consternation when I came to relieve the pocket of my gala gown, donned for the occasion, at discovering among its treasures a tea-napkin, marked gorgeously with the Hon. ——'s family crest, which had maliciously crept into its depths in order to bring me into disgrace! I have never been able to bring myself to the point of confession, in spite of my subsequent intimacy with the family. If it were not for Joseph's positive assertion to the contrary, I should be of the opinion that his cup of divination conjured itself deliberately and sinfully into innocent Benjamin's sack."

Student *loq.* (Testimony open to criticism).—"Met pretty girl on the street yesterday. Sure I had on my 'Armstrong' hat when I left home—sure as fate; but when I went to pull it off—by the crown, of course—to bow to pretty girl, I smashed in my beaver! How it got there, don't know. Knocked it off. Pretty girl picked it up and handed it to me. Confounded things, anyway!"

Total Depravity of Inanimate Things

Young Divine *loq.*—"While I was in the army, I was in Washington on 'leave' for two or three days. One night, at a party, I became utterly bewildered in an attempt to converse, after long desuetude, with a fascinating woman. I went stumbling on, amazing her more and more, until finally I covered myself with glory by the categorical statement that in my opinion General McClellan could 'never get across the Peninsula without a *fattle;* I beg pardon, Madam! what I meant to say is, without a *bight.*'"

Schoolgirl *loq.*—"When Uncle —— was President, I was at the White House at a state dinner one evening. Senator —— came rushing in frantically after we had been at table some time. No sooner was he seated than he turned to Aunt to apologize for his delay; and being very much heated, and very much embarrassed, he tugged away desperately at his pocket, and finally succeeded in extracting a huge blue stocking, evidently of home manufacture, with which he proceeded to wipe his forehead very energetically and very conspicuously. I suppose the truth was, that the poor man's handkerchiefs were 'on a strike,' and thrust forward this homespun stocking to bring him to terms."

Schoolgirl No. 2, *loq.*—"My last term at F. I was expecting a box of 'goodies' from home. So when the message came, 'An express package for you, Miss Fanny!' I invited all my specials to come and assist at the opening.

Instead of the expected box, there appeared a misshapen bundle, done up in yellow wrapping-paper. Four such dejected-looking damsels were never seen before as we, standing around the ugly old thing. Finally Alice suggested:

"'Open it!'

"'Oh, I know what it is,' I said; 'it is my old Tibet, that mother has had made over for me.'

"'Let's see,' persisted Alice.

"So I opened the package. The first thing I drew out was too much for me.

"'What a funny-looking basque!' exclaimed Alice. All the rest were struck dumb with disappointment.

"No! not a basque at all, but a man's black satin waistcoat! and next came objects about which there could be no doubt—a pair of dingy old trousers, and a swallow-tailed coat! Imagine the chorus of damsels!

"The secret was, that two packages lay in father's office—one for me, the other for those everlasting freedmen. John was to forward mine. He had taken up the box to write my address on it, when the yellow bundle tumbled off the desk at his feet and scared the wits out of his head. So I came in for father's second-hand clothes, and the Ethiopians had the 'goodies'!"

Repentant Dominie *loq.*—"I don't approve of it at all; but then, if you must write the wicked thing, I heard a good story for you to-day. Doctor —— found himself in the pulpit

of a Dutch Reformed Church the other Sunday. You know he is one who prides himself on his adaptation to places and times. Just at the close of the introductory service, a black gown lying over the arm of the sofa caught his eye. He was rising to deliver his sermon, when it forced itself on his attention again.

"'Sure enough,' thought he, 'Dutch Reformed clergymen do wear gowns. I might as well put it on.'

"So he solemnly thrust himself into the malicious (as you would say) garment, and went through the service as well as he could, considering that his audience seemed singularly agitated, and, indeed, on the point of bursting out into a general laugh, throughout the entire service. And no wonder! The good Doctor, in his zeal for conformity, had attired himself in the black cambric duster in which the pulpit was shrouded during week-days, and had been gesticulating his eloquent homily with his arms thrust through the holes left for the pulpit lamps."

General Porter tells a story of his farewell to Mark Twain once when Mark was going away. "I said, 'Good-bye, Mark—may God be with you always.' He drawlingly replied: 'I —hope—em —He—will—but—I—hope, too—that He may find some leisure —moments—to—take—care—of—you.'"

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

THE ELF-CHILD

Little Orphant Annie's come to our house to stay,
An' wash the cups and saucers up, an' brush the crumbs away,
An' shoo the chickens off the porch, an' dust the hearth an' sweep
An' make the fire, an' bake the bread, an' earn her board an' keep;
An' all us other children, when the supper things is done,
We set around the kitchen fire an' has the mostest fun
A-listening to the witch tales 'at Annie tells about,
An' the Gobble-uns 'at gits you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

Onct they was a little boy who wouldn't say his prayers—
An' when he went to bed at night, away upstairs,
His mammy heerd him holler an' his daddy heerd him bawl,

An' when they turn't the kivvers down he
wasn't there at all!
An' they seeked him in the rafter room an'
cubby-hole an' press,
An' seeked him up the chimney-flue, an' every-
wheres, I guess,
But all they ever found was thist his pants an'
round-about!—
An' the Gobble-uns 'll git you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

An' one time a little girl 'ud allus laugh an' grin.
An' make fun of ever' one an' all her blood an' kin.
An' onct when they was "company," an' old
folks was there,
She mocked 'em, an' shocked 'em, an' said she
didn't care;
An' thist as she kicked her heels, an' turn't to
run an' hide,
They was two great big Black Things a-standin'
by her side,
An' they snatched her through the ceilin' 'fore
she knowed what she's about!
An' the Gobble-uns 'll git you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

An' little Orphant Annie says, when the blaze is blue,
An' the lampwick sputters, an' the wind goes woo-oo!
An' you hear the crickets quit, an' the moon is gray,
An' the lightnin'-bugs in dew is all squenched away—
You better mind yer parents, an' yer teachers fond an' dear,
An' churish them 'at loves you, an' dry the orphant's tear
An' he'p the pore an' needy ones 'at clusters all about,
Er the Gobble-uns 'll git you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

At a recent dinner party the subject of eternal life and future punishment came up for a lengthy discussion, in which Mark Twain, who was present, took no part. A lady near him turned suddenly toward him and exclaimed:

"Why do you not say anything? I want your opinion."

Twain replied gravely: "Madam, you must excuse me; I am silent of necessity. I have friends in both places."

THE AHKOOND OF SWAT

"The Ahkoond of Swat is dead."
—London Papers of January 22, 1878.

What, what, what,
What's the news from Swat?
Sad news,
Bad news,
Comes by the cable led
Through the Indian Ocean's bed,
Through the Persian Gulf, the Red
Sea and the Med-
Iterranean—he's dead;
The Ahkoond is dead!

For the Ahkoond I mourn,
Who wouldn't?
He strove to disregard the message stern,
But he ahkoodn't.
Dead, dead, dead.
(Sorrow, Swats!)
Swats who hae wi' Ahkoond bled,
Swats whom he hath often led
Onward to a gory bed,
Or to victory,
As the case might be.
Sorrow, Swats!
Tears shed,
Shed tears like water.
Your great Ahkoond is dead!
That Swats the matter!

Mourn, city of Swat,
Your great Ahkoond is not,
But laid 'mid worms to rot.
His mortal part alone, his soul was caught
(Because he was a good Ahkoond)
Up to the bosom of Mahound.
Though earthly walls his frame surround
(Forever hallowed by the ground!)

And skeptics mock the lowly mound
And say, "He's now of no Ahkoond!"
His soul is in the skies—
The azure skies that bend above his loved
Metropolis of Swat.
He sees with larger, other eyes,
Athwart all earthly mysteries—
He knows what's Swat.

Let Swat bury the great Ahkoond
With a noise of mourning and of lamentation!
Let Swat bury the great Ahkoond
With the noise of the mourning of the Swattish nation!
Fallen is at length
Its tower of strength;
Its son is dimmed ere it had nooned;
Dead lies the great Ahkoond,
The great Ahkoond of Swat
Is not!

GEORGE T. LANIGAN.

SAM WALTER FOSS

THE MEETING OF THE CLABBERHUSES

I

He was the Chairman of the Guild
Of Early Pleiocene Patriarchs;
He was chief Mentor of the Lodge
Of the Oracular Oligarchs;
He was the Lord High Autocrat
And Vizier of the Sons of Light,
And Sultan and Grand Mandarin
Of the Millennial Men of Might.

He was Grand Totem and High Priest
Of the Independent Potentates;
Grand Mogul of the Galaxy
Of the Illustrious Stay-out-lates;
The President of the Dandydudes,
The Treasurer of the Sons of Glee;
The Leader of the Clubtown Band
And Architects of Melody.

II

She was Grand Worthy Prophetess
Of the Illustrious Maids of Mark;
Of Vestals of the Third Degree
She was Most Potent Matriarch;
She was High Priestess of the Shrine
Of Clubtown's Culture Coterie,

And First Vice-President of the League
Of the Illustrious G. A. B.
She was the First Dame of the Club
For teaching Patagonians Greek;
She was Chief Clerk and Auditor
Of Clubtown's Anti-Bachelor Clique;
She was High Treasurer of the Fund
For Borrioboolaghalians,
And the Fund for Sending Browning's Poems
To Native-born Australians.

III

Once to a crowded social fête
Both these much-titled people came,
And each perceived, when introduced,
They had the selfsame name.
Their hostess said, when first they met:
"Permit me now to introduce
My good friend Mr. Clabberhuse
To Mrs. Clabberhuse."

"'Tis very strange," said she to him,
"Such an unusual name!—
A name so very seldom heard,
That we should bear the same."
"Indeed, 'tis wonderful," said he,
"And I'm surprised the more,
Because I never heard the name
Outside my home before.

"But now I come to look at you,"
Said he, "upon my life,

The Meeting of the Clabberhuses

If I am not indeed deceived,
You are—you are—my wife."
She gazed into his searching face
And seemed to look him through;
"Indeed," said she, "it seems to me
You are my husband, too.

"I 've been so busy with my clubs
And in my various spheres
I have not seen you now," she said,
"For over fourteen years."
"That's just the way it's been with me,
These clubs demand a sight"—
And then they both politely bowed,
And sweetly said, "Good-night."

Mr. Joseph Willard, for a long time clerk of the Superior Court of Massachusetts, in Boston, relates in his "Half a Century with Judges and Lawyers" many good anecdotes.

Colonel Edward G. Parker, who was rather pedantic, wrote a life of Mr. Choate. He was relating an incident which happened in the third century before Christ, about the time of the death of Ptolemy III., and he appealed to John S Holmes, who stood by.

"Didn't he die about that time, John?"

"Who's that that's dead?" asked Holmes.

"Ptolemy III.," said Parker.

"What! What!" said Holmes, stretching out his hands. "You don't say he's dead!"

J. M. BAILEY

(*Danbury News*)

AFTER THE FUNERAL

It was just after the funeral. The bereaved and subdued widow, enveloped in millinery gloom, was seated in the sitting-room with a few sympathizing friends. There was that constrained look so peculiar to the occasion observable on every countenance. The widow sighed.

"How do you feel, my dear?" said her sister.

"Oh! I don't know," said the poor woman, with difficulty restraining her tears. "But I hope everything passed off well."

"Indeed it did," said all the ladies.

"It was as large and respectable a funeral as I have seen this winter," said the sister, looking around upon the others.

"Yes, it was," said the lady from next door. "I was saying to Mrs. Slocum, only ten minutes ago, that the attendance couldn't have been better — the bad going considered."

"Did you see the Taylors?" asked the widow faintly, looking at her sister. "They go so rarely to funerals that I was surprised to see them here."

"Oh, yes! the Taylors were all here," said the sympathizing sister. "As you say, they go but a little: they are *so* exclusive!"

"I thought I saw the Curtises also," suggested the bereaved woman droopingly.

"Oh, yes!" chimed in several. "They came in their own carriage, too," said the sister, animatedly. "And then there were the Randalls and the Van Rensselaers. Mrs. Van Rensselaer had her cousin from the city with her; and Mrs. Randall wore a very heavy black silk, which I am sure was quite new. Did you see Colonel Haywood and his daughters, love?"

"I thought I saw them: but I wasn't sure. They were here, then, were they?"

"Yes, indeed!" said they all again; and the lady who lived across the way observed:

"The Colonel was very sociable, and inquired most kindly about you, and the sickness of your husband."

The widow smiled faintly. She was gratified by the interest shown by the Colonel.

The friends now rose to go, each bidding her good-bye, and expressing the hope that she would be calm. Her sister bowed them out. When she returned, she said:

"You can see, my love, what the neighbors think of it. I wouldn't have had anything unfortunate to happen for a good deal. But nothing did. The arrangements couldn't have been better."

"I think some of the people in the neighborhood must have been surprised to see so many of the uptown people here," suggested the afflicted woman, trying to look hopeful.

"You may be quite sure of that," asserted the sister. "I could see that plain enough by their looks."

"Well, I am glad there is no occasion for talk," said the widow, smoothing the skirt of her dress.

And after that the boys took the chairs home, and the house was put in order.

THE UNATTAINABLE

Tom's album was filled with the pictures of belles
Who had captured his manly heart,
From the fairy who danced for the front-row swells
To the maiden who tooled her cart;
But one face as fair as a cloudless dawn
Caught my eye, and I said, "Who's this?"
"Oh, that," he replied, with a skilful yawn,
"Is the girl I couldn't kiss."

Her face was the best in the book, no doubt,
But I hastily turned the leaf,
For my friend had let his cigar go out,
And I knew I had bared his grief:
For caresses we win and smiles we gain
Yield only a transient bliss,
And we're all of us prone to sigh in vain
For "the girl we couldn't kiss."

HARRY ROMAINE.

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GEORGE T. LANIGAN

THE OSTRICH AND THE HEN

An Ostrich and a Hen chanced to occupy adjacent apartments, and the former complained loudly that her rest was disturbed by the cackling of her humble neighbor. "Why is it," she finally asked the Hen, "that you make such an intolerable noise?" The Hen replied, "Because I have laid an egg." "Oh, no," said the Ostrich, with a superior smile, "it is because you are a Hen and don't know any better."

Moral.—The moral of the foregoing is not very clear, but it contains some reference to the Agitation for Female Suffrage.

THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE ANT

A frivolous Grasshopper, having spent the summer in Mirth and Revelry, went on the Approach of the inclement winter to the Ant and implored it of its charity to stake him. "You had better go to your Uncle," replied the prudent Ant; "had you imitated my Forethought and deposited your Funds in a Savings Bank, you would not now be compelled to regard your Duster in the light of an Ulster."

Thus saying, the virtuous Ant retired, and read in the Papers next morning that the Savings Bank where he had deposited his Funds had suspended.

Moral.—Dum vivimus, vivamus.

THE PHILOSOPHER AND THE SIMPLETON

A Simpleton, having had Occasion to seat himself, sat down on a Pin; whereon he made an Outcry unto Jupiter. A Philosopher, who happened to be holding up a Hitching-Post in the Vicinity, rebuked him, saying: "I can tell you how to avoid hurting yourself by sitting down on Pins, and will, if you will set them up." The Simpleton eagerly accepting the Offer, the Philosopher swallowed four fingers of the Rum which perisheth, and replied, "Never sit down." He subsequently acquired a vast Fortune by advertising for Agents, to whom he guaranteed $77 a Week for light and easy Employment at their Homes.

Moral.—The Wise Man said: "There is a Nigger in the Fence," but the Fool Sendeth on 50 cents for Sample and is Taken in.

THE SHARK AND THE PATRIARCH

During the Deluge, as a Shark was conducting a Thanksgiving service for an abundant Harvest, a prudent Patriarch looked out and addressed him thus: "My Friend, I am much

struck with your open Countenance; pray come into the Ark and make one of us. The Probabilities are a falling Barometer and Heavy Rains throughout the Region of the Lower Universe during the next Forty Days." "That is just the sort of Hairpin I am," replied the Shark, who had cut several rows of Wisdom Teeth; "fetch on your Deluges." About six Weeks subsequently the Patriarch encountered him on the summit of Mount Ararat, in very straitened Circumstances.

Moral.—You Can't pretty much most Always Tell how Things are going to Turn Out Sometimes.—*Fables, by G. Washington Æsop.*

At the Thousand Islands, at dinner one day, Daniel W. Powers and his friends were discussing the merits of different species of game. One preferred canvas-back ducks, another woodcock and still another thought a quail the most delicious article of food. The discussion and the dinner ended at about the same time.

"Well, Frank," said Dan, turning to the waiter at his elbow, who was as good a listener as he was a waiter, "what kind of game do you like best?"

"Well, Massa Powers, to tell you the trufe, almost any kind of game'll suit me, but what I likes best is an American Eagle served on a silver dollar."

A LIZ-TOWN HUMORIST

Settin' round the stove, last night,
Down at Wess's store, was me
And Mart Strimples, Tunk, and White,
And Doc Bills, and two er three
Fellers of the Mudsock tribe
No use tryin' to describe!
And says Doc, he says, says he—
"Talkin' 'bout good things to eat,
Ripe mushmillon's hard to beat!"

I chawed on. And Mart he 'lowed
Wortermillon beat the mush—
"Red," he says, "and juicy—Hush!—
I 'll jes' leave it to the crowd!"
Then a Mudsock chap, says he—
"Punkin's good enough fer me—
Punkin pies, I mean," he says—
"Them beats millons! What say, Wess?"

I chawed on. And Wess says—"Well
You jes' fetch that wife of mine
All yer wortermillon-*rine*,
And she'll bile it down a spell—
In with sorgum, I suppose,
And what else, Lord only knows!—
But I 'm here to tell all hands,
Them p'serves meets my demands!"

I chawed on. And White he says—
"Well, I'll jes' stand in with Wess—
I'm no hog!" And Tunk says—"I
Guess I'll pastur' out on pie
With the Mudsock boys!" says he;
"Now what's yourn?" he says to me:
I chawed on—fer quite a spell—
Then I speaks up, slow and dry—
"Jes' tobacker!" I-says-I.—
And you'd orto' heered 'em yell!

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.

Doctor Burton and Doctor Gage were ministers of two Congregational churches in Hartford, and excellent friends. Like many other clergymen, they loved a joke, especially at each other's expense. Doctor Gage had traveled abroad, and since his return had been delivering a course of lectures upon Old World subjects. One of the lectures—on Palestine—had been thought not so interesting as the others, and on its second delivery many of the auditors withdrew before it was finished. Not long afterward Doctor Gage's house was entered by a burglar. Doctor Gage was giving Doctor Burton an account of the affair. "Why, Doctor, I had him down flat on his back; I held him there; he couldn't move an inch."

"Good!" said Doctor Burton. "But what a splendid opportunity that was to have delivered to him your lecture on Palestine!"

CHARLES B. LEWIS ("M. Quad")

TWO CASES OF GRIP

"WHAT'S this! What's this!" exclaimed Mr. Bowser, as he came home the other evening and found Mrs. Bowser lying on the sofa and looking very much distressed.

"The doctor says it's the grip—a second attack," she explained. "I was taken with a chill and headache about noon and——"

"Grip? Second attack? That's all nonsense, Mrs. Bowser! Nobody can have the grip a second time."

"But the doctor says so."

"Then the doctor is an idiot, and I'll tell him so to his face. I know what's the matter with you. You've been walking around the back yard barefoot or doing some other foolish thing. I expected it, however. No woman is happy unless she's flat down about half the time. How on earth any of your sex manage to live to be twenty years old is a mystery to me. The average woman has no more sense than a rag baby."

"I haven't been careless," she replied.

"I know better! Of course you have! If you hadn't been you wouldn't be where you are. Grip be hanged! Well, it's only right that you

should suffer for it. Call it what you wish, but don't expect any sympathy from me. While I use every precaution to preserve my health, you go sloshing around in your bare feet, or sit on a cake of ice to read a dime novel, or do some other tomfool thing to flatten you out. I refuse to sympathize with you, Mrs. Bowser—absolutely and teetotally refuse to utter one word of pity."

Mrs. Bowser had nothing to say in reply. Mr. Bowser ate his dinner alone, took advantage of the occasion to drive a few nails and make a great noise, and by and by went off to his club and was gone until midnight. Next morning Mrs. Bowser felt a bit better and made an heroic attempt to be about until he started for the office.

The only reference he made to her illness was to say:

"If you live to be three hundred years old, you may possibly learn something about the laws of health and be able to keep out of bed three days in a week."

Mrs. Bowser was all right at the end of three or four days, and nothing more was said. Then one afternoon at three o'clock a carriage drove up and a stranger assisted Mr. Bowser into the house. He was looking pale and ghastly, and his chin quivered, and his knees wobbled.

"What is it, Mr. Bowser?" she exclaimed, as she met him at the door.

"Bed—doctor—death!" he gasped in reply.

Mrs. Bowser got him to bed and examined him for bullet holes or knife wounds. There were none. He had no broken limbs. He hadn't fallen off a horse or been half drowned. When she had satisfied herself on these points, she asked:

"How were you taken?"

"W-with a c-chill!" he gasped—"with a c-chill and a b-backache!"

"I thought so. Mr. Bowser, you have the grip—a second attack As I have some medicine left, there's no need to send for the doctor. I'll have you all right in a day or two.'

"Get the doctor at once," wailed Mr. Bowser, "or I'm a dead man! Such a backache! So cold! Mrs. Bowser, if I should d-die, I hope——"

Emotion overcame Mr. Bowser, and he could say no more. The doctor came and pronounced it a second attack of grip, but a very mild one. When he had departed, Mrs. Bowser didn't accuse Mr. Bowser with putting on his summer flannels a month too soon; with forgetting his umbrella and getting soaked through; with leaving his rubbers at home and having damp feet all day. She didn't express her wonder that he hadn't died years ago nor predict that when he reached the age of Methuselah he would know better than to roll in snowbanks or stand around in mud puddles. She didn't kick over chairs or slam doors or leave him

alone. When Mr. Bowser shed tears, she wiped them away. When he moaned, she held his hand. When he said he felt that the grim specter was near and wanted to kiss the baby good-by, she cheered him with the prediction that he would be a great deal better next day.

Mr. Bowser didn't get up next day, though the doctor said he could. He lay in bed and sighed and uttered sorrowful moans and groans. He wanted toast and preserves; he had to have help to turn over; he worried about a relapse; he had to have a damp cloth on his forehead; he wanted to have a council of doctors, and he read the copy of his last will and testament over three times.

Mr. Bowser was all right next morning, however. When Mrs. Bowser asked him how he felt he replied:

"How do I feel? Why, as right as a trivet, of course. When a man takes the care of himself that I do—when he has the nerve and will power I have—he can throw off 'most anything. You would have died, Mrs. Bowser; but I was scarcely affected. It was just a play spell. I'd like to be real sick once just to see how it would seem. Cholera, I suppose it was; but outside of feeling a little tired, I wasn't at all affected."

And the dutiful Mrs. Bowser looked at him and swallowed it all and never said a word to hurt his feelings.—*Mr. and Mrs. Bowser.*

WILLIAM RUSSELL ROSE

THE CONSCIENTIOUS CURATE AND THE BEAUTEOUS BALLET GIRL

YOUNG William was a curate good,
Who to himself did say:
"I cawn't denounce the stage as vile
Until I've seen a play."

He was so con-sci-en-ti-ous
That, when the play he sought,
To grasp its entire wickedness
A front row seat he bought.

'Twas in the burlesque, you know, the burlesque of "Prince Prettypate, or the Fairy Muffin Ring," and when the ballet came on, that good young curate met his fate. She, too, was in the front row, and——

She danced like this, she danced like that
Her feet seemed everywhere;
They scarcely touched the floor at all
But twinkled in the air.

Her *entrechat*, her fairy *pas*,
Filled William with delight.

She whirled around, his heart did bound—
'Twas true love at first sight.

He sought her out and married her;
Of course she left the stage,
And in his daily parish work
With William did engage.

She helped him in his parish school
Where ragged urchins go,
And all the places on the map
She'd point out with her toe.

And when William gently remonstrated with her, she only said: "William, when I married you I gave you my hand—my feet are still my own."

She'd point like this, she'd point like that,
The scholars she'd entrance—
"This, children, is America;
And this, you see, is France.

"A highland here, an island there,
'Round which the waters roll;
And this is Pa-ta-go-ni-ah,
And this the frozen Pole."

Young William's bishop called one day
But found the curate out,
And so he told the curate's wife
What he had come about.

"Your merit William oft to me
Most highly doth extol;
I trust, my dear, you always try
To elevate the soul."

Then William's wife made the bishop a neat little curtsey, and gently said, "Oh, yes, your Grace, I always do—in my own peculiar way."

She danced like this, she danced like that,
The bishop looked aghast;
He could not see her mazy skirts
They switched around so fast.

She tripped it here, she skipped it there
The bishop's eyes did roll—
"God bless me! 'tis a pleasant way
To elevate the sole!"

From *Life*.

When General George Sheridan was camping on the Lower Mississippi, his Negro boy, Harry, was one day asked by a friend whether the General was not terribly annoyed by the mosquitoes. "No, sah!" said Harry; "in the evenin' Mars' George is so 'toxicated he don't mind the skeeters, and in the mornin' the skeeters is so 'toxicated they don't mind Mars' George."

JAMES L. FORD

THE SOCIETY REPORTER'S CHRISTMAS

EARLY morn in the little parlor of a humble white cottage, where Susan Swallowtail sat waiting for her husband to return from the ball. It lacked but a few days of Christmas, and she had arisen with her little ones at five o'clock in order that William, her husband, might have a warm breakfast and a loving greeting on his return after his long night's work.

Seated before the fire, with her sewing on her lap, Susan Swallowtail's thoughts went back to the days when William, then on the threshold of his career as a society reporter, had first won her young heart by his description of her costume at the ball of the "Ladies' Daughters' Association of the Ninth Ward." She remembered how gallantly and tenderly he had wooed her through the columns of the four weekly and Sunday papers in which he conducted the "Fashion Chit-chat" columns, and then the tears filled her eyes as memory brought once more before her the terrible night when William came to the house and asked her father, the stern old house and sign painter, for his daughter's hand.

"And yet," said Susan to herself, "my life

has not been altogether an unhappy one, in spite of our poverty. William has a kind heart, and I am sure that if he had anything to wear besides his dress-suit and flannel dressing-gown he would often brighten my lot by taking me out somewhere in the daytime. Ah, if papa would only relent! But I fear he will never forgive me for my marriage."

Her thoughts were interrupted by the sound of familiar footsteps in the hall, and the next moment her husband had clasped her in his arms, while the children clung to his ulster and clamored for their early morning kiss.

But there was a cloud on the young husband's brow and a tremor on his lips as he said, "Run away now, little ones; papa and mamma have something to say to each other that little ears must not hear.

"My darling," he said, as soon as they were alone, "I fear that our Christmas will not be a very merry one. You know how we always depend on the ball of the Gilt-edged Coterie for our Christmas dinner?"

"Indeed I do," replied the young wife, with a bright smile. "What beautiful slices of roast beef and magnificent mince pies you always bring home from that ball! Surely they will give their entertainment on Christmas Eve this year as they always have?"

"Yes, but—can you bear to hear it, love?"

"Let me know the worst," said the young wife bravely.

"Then," said William hoarsely, "I will tell you. I am not going to that ball. The city editor is going to take the assignment himself, and I must go to a literary and artistic gathering where there will be nothing but tea and recitations."

"Yes," said Susan bitterly, "and sandwiches so thin that they can be used to watch the eclipse of the sun. But what have you brought back with you now? I hope it is something nourishing."

"My darling," replied William Swallowtail, in faltering tones, "I fear you are doomed to another disappointment. I have done my best to-night, but this is all I could get my hands on," and with these words he drew from the pockets of his heavy woolen ulster a paper bag filled with wine jelly, a box of *marrons glaces*, and two pint bottles of champagne.

"Is that all?" said Susan reproachfully. "The children have had nothing to eat since yesterday morning except *pates de foie gras*, macaroons, and hothouse grapes. All day long they have been crying for corned beef sandwiches, and I have had none to give them. You told me, William, when we parted in the early evening, that you were going to a house where there would be at least ham, and perhaps bottled beer, and now you return to me with this paltry package of jelly and that very sweet wine. I hope, William"—and a cold, hard look of suspicion crept into her face—"that you

have not forgotten your vows and given to another——"

"Susan!" cried William Swallowtail, "how can you speak or even think of such a thing, when you know full well that——"

But Susan withdrew from his embrace, and asked in bitter, cold accents, "Was there ham at that reception, or was there not?"

"There was ham, and corned beef, too. I will not deny it; but——"

"Then, William, with what woman have you shared it?" demanded the young wife, drawing herself up to her full height and fixing her dark, flashing eyes full upon him.

"Susan, I implore you, listen to me, and do not judge me too harshly. There *was* ham, but there were several German noblemen there, too—Baron Sneeze of the Austrian legation, Count Pretzel, and a dozen more. The smell of meat inflamed them, and I fought my way through them in time to save only this from the wreck."

He drew from his ulster pocket something done up in a piece of paper, and handed it to his wife. She opened the package and saw that it contained what looked like a long piece of very highly polished ivory. Then her face softened, her lips trembled, and her eyes brimmed over with tears.

"Forgive me, William, for my unjust suspicions," she exclaimed, as she threw herself once more into his arms. "This mute ham-

bone tells me far more stongly than any words of yours could the story of the society reporter's awful struggle for life."

William kissed his young wife affectionately and then sat down to the breakfast which she had prepared for him.

"I hope," she said cheerfully, as she took a dish of lobster salad from the oven, where it had been warmed over, "that you will keep a sharp lookout for quail this week. It would be nice to have one or two for our Christmas dinner. Of course we cannot afford corned beef and cabbage like those rich people whom you call by their first names when you write about them in the Sunday papers; but I do hope we will not be obliged to put up with cakes and pastry and such wretched stuff."

"Quail!" exclaimed her husband; "they are so scarce and shy this winter that we are obliged to take setter dogs with us to the entertainments at which they are served. But I will do my best, darling."

As soon as William had gone to bed Susan took from its hiding-place the present which she had prepared for her husband and proceeded to sew it to the inside of his ulster as a Christmas surprise for him. She sighed to think that it was the best she could afford this year. It was a useful rather than an ornamental gift—a simple rubber pocket, made from a piece of an old mackintosh, and intended for William to carry soup in.

But Susan had a bright, hopeful spirit, and a smile soon smoothed the furrows from her face as she murmured, "How nice it will be when William comes home with his new pocket filled with nice, warm, nourishing bouillon!" and then she glanced up from her work and saw that her daughter, little golden-haired Eva, had entered the room and was looking at her out of her great, truthful, deep-blue eyes.

. . . . . .

It was Christmas Eve, and as Jacob Scaffold trudged through the frosty streets the keen air brought a ruddy glow to his cheeks and tipped his nose with a brighter carmine than any that he used in the practice of his art. Entering the hall in which the ball of the Gilt-edged Coterie was taking place, the proud old house- and sign-painter quickly divested himself of his outer wraps and made his way to the committee room.

Then, adorned with a huge badge and streamer, he strolled out to greet his friends who were making merry on the polished floor of the ball-room. But, although the band played its most stirring measures and the lights gleamed on arms and necks of dazzling whiteness, old Jacob Scaffold sighed deeply as he seated himself in a rather obscure corner and allowed his eyes to roam about the room as if in search of some familiar face.

The fact was that the haughty, purse-proud old man was thinking of another Christmas Eve

ten years before, when his daughter Susan had danced at this same ball, the brightest, the prettiest, and the most sought-after girl on the floor.

"And to think," said the old man to himself, "that, with all the opportunities she had to make a good match, she should have taken up with that reporter in the shiny dress-suit! It's five years since I've heard anything of her, but of late I've been thinking that maybe I was too harsh with her, and perhaps——"

His thoughts were interrupted by the arrival of a servant, who told him that some one desired to see him in the committee room. On reaching that apartment, he found a little girl of perhaps eight years of age, plainly clad, and carrying a basket in her hand. Fixing her eyes on Jacob Scaffold, she said:

"Please, sir, are you the chairman of the press committee?"

"I am," replied the puzzled artist; "but who are you?"

"I am the reporter of the *Sunday Guff*. My papa has charge of the 'What the Four Hundred Are Doing' column, but to-night he is obliged to attend a chromo-literary reception, where there will be nothing to eat but tea and cake. Papa has reported your balls and chowder excursions for the past five years, and we have always had ham for dessert for a week afterward. We had all been looking forward to your Christmas Eve ball, and when papa told us that he would have

to go to the tea-and-cake place to-night mamma felt so badly that I took papa's ticket out of his pocket when he was asleep and came here myself. Papa has a thick ulster, full of nice big pockets, that he puts on when he goes out to report, but I have brought a basket."

The child finished her simple and affecting narrative and the members of the press committee looked at one another dumfounded. Jacob Scaffold was the first to break the silence.

"And what is your name, little child?" he inquired.

"Eva Swallowtail," she answered, as she turned a pair of trusting, innocent blue eyes full upon him.

The old man grew pale and his lips trembled as he gathered his grandchild in his arms. The other members of the committee softly left the room, for they all knew the story of Susan Scaffold's *mesalliance* and her father's bitter feelings toward her and her husband.

"What!" cried Jacob Scaffold, "my grandchild wanting bread? Come to me, little one, and we'll see what can be done for you."

And putting on his heavy ulster, he took little Eva by the hand and led the way to the great thoroughfare, on which the stores were still open.

. . . . . .

It was a happy family party that sat down to dinner in William Swallowtail's humble

home that bright Christmas Day, and well did the little ones enjoy the treat which their generous new-found grandparent provided for them. They began with a soup made of wine jelly, and ended with a delicious dessert of corned beef sandwiches and large German pickles; and then, when they could eat no more, and now even a pork pie could tempt their appetites, Grandpa Scaffold told his daughter that he was willing to lift his son-in-law from the hard and ill-paid labor of writing society chronicles and give him a chance to better himself with a whitewash brush. "And," continued the old man, "if I see that he possesses true artistic talent, I will some day give him a chance at the side of a house."

Charles H. Hoyt once journeyed to San Francisco with one of his own companies. Most of his companions got out very early one morning to have a look at the Rocky Mountain scenery. Hoyt remained in his stateroom. One of the young women, in her enthusiasm over the prospect, ran excitedly to his door and thumped on it with vigor.

"What's the row?" came from within.

"Come out, Mr. Hoyt; come out and see the perfectly lovely scenery."

"I don't want to see it," replied Hoyt. "I'm paying excess baggage now on a good deal of it. That's enough for me."

A SLAVE TO DUTY

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON recently told a gathering of Negroes that one of the great faults of his race was a disposition to exhibit knowledge under any and all circumstances, and asserted that, until the Negro learned not to display his vanity, he was useless in any confidential capacity. By way of illustration he told a story, which, he said, might be or might not he apocryphal, but which was good enough to be true. General Sherman had been told that the soldiers of a Negro regiment in his command were very lax when on sentry duty, and showed a fondness for passing doubtful persons through the lines just to indulge their power to do so. To ascertain if this were so, he muffled himself one night in a cloak and tried to get past a black sentry. After the "Who goes there?" the "A friend," and the "Advance, friend, and give the countersign," had been exchanged, Sherman replied:

"Roxbury!"

"No, sah!" was the polite but firm response.

"Medford!"

"No, sah!"

"Charleston!" Sherman next tried.

"No, sah! No, sah!" said the Negro determinedly. Then he added: "Now, seea heah—yo' can go fru th' whole blamed joggrafy,

but Massa Sherman he done say that nobody can get pas' me wifout sayin' 'Cambridge'!"

It was a Tennessee Methodist class-leader who had before him a six-months' probationer whom he was questioning for admission to all the privileges of the church.

"Well, Sambo," said the class-leader, "I hope you are prepared to live a Christian life in accordance with your profession. Have you stolen any chickens during the last six months?"

"No, sah! I done stole *no* chickens."

"Have you stolen any turkeys or pigs?"

Sambo looked grieved. "No, sah!"

"I am very glad to hear this good report," continued the class-leader, "and I trust you will continue to live an honest, Christian life."

After church Sambo hurried home with his wife, who had overheard the catechizing. When they were fairly out of everybody's hearing he drew a long breath of relief and turned a self-approving glance to his better half. "Golly," he said, in a half-cautious whisper, "ef he'd er said ducks I'd be'n a lost niggah, suah."

THE HEIRESS

She cannot talk, she cannot sing,
  She looks a fright; but folks aver
Ten millions have been set apart
  To talk and sing and look for her.

THE LEGEND OF MIMIR

It is a beautiful legend of the Norseland. Amilias was the village blacksmith, and under the spreading chestnut treekjn his village smithophjken stood. He the hot iron gehammered and sjhod horses for fifty cents all round, please. He made tin hjelmets for the gjodds, and stovepipe trousers for the hjeroes.

Mimir was a rival blacksmith. He didn't go in very much for defensive armor, but he was lightning on two-edged Bjswords and cut-and-slash svjcutlasssses. He made chyjeese-knives for the gjodds, and he made the great Bjsvsstnsen an Arkansaw toothpick that would make a free incision clear into the transverse semicolon of a cast-iron Ichthyosaurus and never turn its edge. That was the kind of a Bhjairpin Mimir said he was.

One day Amilias made an impenetrable suit of armor for a second-class gjodd, and put it on himself to test it, and boastfully inserted a card in the *Svensska Norderbjravisk jkanaheldesplvtdenskgorodovusaken*, saying that he was wearing a suit of home-made, best chilled Norway merino underwear that would nick the unnumbered saw-teeth in the pot-metal cutlery of the ironmongery over the way. That, Amilias remarked to Bjohnn Bjrobinssson, was the kind of a Bdjucckk he was.

When Mimir spelled out the card next morning, he said, "Bjjj!" and went to work with a charcoal furnace, a cold anvil, and the new isomorphic process, and in a little while he came down street with a sjword, that glittered like a dollar-store diamond, and met Amilias down by the new opera house. Amilias buttoned on his new Bjarmor and said,

"If you have no hereafter use for your chyjeese-kjnife, strike."

Mimir spat on his hands, whirled his skjword above his head, and fetched Amilias a swipe that seemed to miss everything except the empty air, through which it softly whistled. Amilias smiled, and said "Go on," adding that it "seemed to him he felt a general sense of cold iron somewhere in the neighborhood, but he hadn't been hit."

"Shake yourself," said Mimir.

Amilias shook himself, and immediately fell into halves, the most neatly divided man that ever went beside himself.

"That's where the boiler-maker was away off in his diagnosis," said Mimir, as he went back to his shop to put up the price of cutlery sixty-five per cent, in all lines, with an unlimited advance on special orders.

Thus do we learn that a good action is never thrown away, and that kind words and patient love will overcome the harshest natures.

ROBERT JONES BURDETTE.

BILL NYE

HOW TO HUNT THE FOX

The joyous season for hunting is again upon us, and with the gentle fall of the autumn leaf and the sough of the scented breezes about the gnarled and naked limbs of the wailing trees—the huntsman comes with his hark and his halloo and hurrah, boys, the swift rush of the chase, the thrilling scamper 'cross country, the mad dash through the Long Islander's pumpkin patch—also the mad dash, dash, dash of the farmer, the low moan of the disabled and frozen-toed hen as the whooping horsemen run her down; the wild shriek of the children, the low, melancholy wail of the frightened shoat as he flees away to the straw pile, the quick yet muffled plunk of the frozen tomato, and the dull scrunch of the seed cucumber.

The huntsman now takes the flannels off his fox, rubs his stiffened limbs with gargling oil, ties a bunch of firecrackers to his tail, and runs him around the barn a few times to see if he is in good order.

The foxhound is a cross of the bloodhound, the greyhound, the bulldog, and the chump. When you step on his tail he is said to be in full cry. The foxhound obtains from his

ancestors on the bloodhound side of the house his keen scent, which enables him while in full cry 'cross country to pause and hunt for chipmunks. He also obtains from the bloodhound branch of his family a wild yearning to star in an "Uncle Tom" company, and watch little Eva meander up the flume at two dollars per week. From the greyhound he gets his most miraculous speed, which enables him to attain a rate of velocity so great that he is unable to halt during the excitement of the chase, frequently running so far during the day that it takes him a week to get back, when, of course, all interest has died out. From the bulldog the foxhound obtains his great tenacity of purpose, his deep-seated convictions, his quick perceptions, his love of home, and his clinging nature. From the chump the foxhound gets his high intellectuality and that mental power which enables him to distinguish almost at a glance the salient points of difference between a two-year-old steer and a two-dollar bill.

The foxhound is about two feet in height, and 120 of them would be considered an ample number for a quiet little fox-hunt. Some hunters think this number inadequate, but unless the fox be unusually skittish and crawl under the barn, 120 foxhounds ought to be enough. The trouble generally is that hunters make too much noise, thus scaring the fox so that he tries to get away from them. This necessitates hard riding and great activity on the part of the whippers-in. Frightening a

fox almost always results in sending him out of the road, and compelling horsemen to stop in order to take down a panel of fence every little while that they may follow the animal, and before you can get the fence put up again the owner is on the ground, and after you have made change with him and mounted again the fox may be nine miles away. Try by all means to keep your fox in the road!

It makes a great difference what kind of fox you use, however. I once had a fox on my Pumpkin Butte estates that lasted me three years, and I never knew him to shy or turn out of the road for anything but a loaded team. He was the best fox for hunting purposes that I ever had. Every spring I would sprinkle him with Scotch snuff and put him away in the bureau till fall. He would then come out bright and chipper. He was always ready to enter into the chase with all the *chic* and *embonpoint* of a regular Kenosha; and nothing pleased him better than to be about eight miles in advance of my thoroughbred pack in full cry, scampering 'cross country, while, stretching back a few miles behind the dogs, followed a pale young man and his financier, each riding a horse that had sat down too hard on its tail some time and driven it into its system about six joints.

Some hunters who are madly and passionately devoted to the sport leap their horses over fences, moats, *donjon* keeps, hedges and currant bushes with utter *sang-froid* and the wild,

unfettered *toot ongsomble* of a brass band. It is one of the most spirited and touchful of sights to see a young fox-hunter going home through the gloaming with a full cry in one hand and his pancreas in the other.

Some like to be in at the death, as it is called, and it is certainly a laudable ambition. To see 120 dogs hold out against a ferocious fox weighing nine pounds; to watch the brave little band of dogs and whippers-in and horses with sawed-off tails, making up in heroism what they lack in numbers, succeeding at last in ridding the country of the ferocious brute which has long been the acknowledged foe of the human race, is indeed a fine sight.

We are too apt to regard fox-hunting merely as a relaxation, a source of pleasure, and the result of a desire to do the way people do in the novels which we steal from English authors; but this is not all. To successfully hunt a fox, to jump fences 'cross country like an unruly steer, is no child's play. To ride all day on a very hot and restless saddle, trying to lope while your horse is trotting, giving your friends a good view of the country between yourself and your horse, then leaping stone walls, breaking your collar-bone in four places, pulling out one eye and leaving it hanging on a plum tree, or going home at night with your transverse colon wrapped around the pommel of your saddle and your liver in an old newspaper, requires the greatest courage.

Too much stress cannot be placed upon the costume worn while fox-hunting, and in fact, that is, after all, the life and soul of the chase. For ladies, nothing looks better than a close-fitting jacket, sewed together with thread of the same shade, and a skirt. Neat-fitting cavalry boots and a plug hat complete the costume. Then, with a hue in one hand and a cry in the other, she is prepared to mount. Lead the horse up to a stone wall or a freight car and spring lightly into the saddle with a glad cry. A freight car is the best thing from which to mount a horse, but it is too unwieldy, and frequently delays the chase. For this reason, too much luggage should not be carried on a fox-hunt. Some gentlemen carry a change of canes, neatly concealed in a shawl-strap, but even this may be dispensed with.

For gentlemen, a dark four-button cutaway coat, with neat, loose-fitting, white panties, will generally scare a fox into convulsions, so that he may be easily killed with a club. A short-waisted plug hat may be worn also, in order to distinguish the hunter from the whipper-in, who wears a baseball cap. The only fox-hunting I have over done was on board an impetuous, tough-bitted, fore-and-aft horse that had emotional insanity. I was dressed in a swallow-tail coat, waistcoat of Scotch plaid Turkish toweling, and a pair of close-fitting breeches of etiquette tucked into my boot-tops. As I was away from home at the time and could

not reach my own steed, I was obliged to mount a spirited steed with high, intellectual hips, one white eye, and a big red nostril that you could set a Shanghai hen in. This horse, as soon as the pack broke into full cry, climbed over a fence that had wrought-iron briers on it, lit in a cornfield, stabbed his hind leg through a sere and yellow pumpkin, which he wore the rest of the day, with seven yards of pumpkin vine streaming out behind, and away we dashed 'cross country.

I remained mounted not because I enjoyed it, for I did not, but because I dreaded to dismount. I hated to get off in pieces. If I can't get off a horse's back as a whole, I would rather adhere to the horse. I will adhere that I did so.

We did not see the fox, but we saw almost everything else. I remember, among other things, of riding through a hothouse, and how I enjoyed it. A morning scamper through a conservatory when the syringas and jonquils and Jack-roses lie cuddled up together in their little beds is a thing to remember and look back to and pay for. To stand knee-deep in glass and gladioli, to smell the mashed and mussed-up mignonette and the last fragrant sigh of the scrunched heliotrope beneath the hoof of your horse, while far away the deep-mouthed baying of the hoarse hounds, hotly hugging the reeking trail of the aniseed bag, calls on the gorgeously caparisoned hills to

give back their merry music or fork it over to other answering hills, is joy to the huntsman's heart.

On, on I rode with my unconfined locks streaming behind me in the autumn wind. On and still on I sped, the big, bright pumpkin slipping up and down the gambrel of my spirited horse at every jump. On and ever on we went shedding terror and pumpkin seeds along our glittering track, till my proud steed ran his leg in a gopher hole and fell over one of those machines that they put on a high-headed steer to keep him from jumping fences. As the horse fell, the necklace of this hickory poke flew up and adjusted itself around my throat. In an instant my steed was on his feet again, and gaily we went forward, while the prong of this barbarous appliance ever and anon plowed into a brand-new culvert or rooted up a clover-field. Every time it ran into an orchard or a cemetery it would jar my neck and knock me silly. But I could see with joy that it reduced the speed of my horse. At last, as the sun went down, reluctantly, it seemed to me, for he knew that he would never see such riding again, my ill-spent horse fell with a hollow moan, curled up, gave a spasmodic quiver with his little, nerveless, sawed-off tail, and died.

The other huntsmen succeeded in treeing the aniseed bag at sundown, in time to catch the six o'clock train home.

Fox-hunting is one of the most thrilling

pastimes of which I know, and for young men whose parents have amassed large sums of money in the intellectual pursuit of hides and tallow, the meet, the chase, the scamper, the full cry, the cover, the stellated fracture, the yelp of the pack, the yip, the yell of triumph, the confusion, the whoop, the holla, the halloos, the hurrah, the abrasion, the snort of the hunter, the concussion, the sward, the open, the earth-stopper, the strangulated hernia, the glad cry of the hound as he brings home the quivering seat of the peasant's pantaloons, the yelp of joy as he lays at his master's feet the strawberry mark of the rustic, all, all are exhilarating to the sons of our American nobility.

Fox-hunting combines the danger and the wild tumultuous joy of the skating-rink, the taboggan slide, the mush-and-milk sociable and the straw ride.

With a good horse, an air cushion, a reliable earth-stopper and an aniseed bag, a man must indeed be thoroughly blasé who cannot enjoy a scamper across country, over the Pennsylvania wold, the New Jersey mere, the Connecticut moor, the Indiana glade, the Missouri brake, the Michigan mead, the American tarn, the fen, the gulch, the buffalo wallow, the cranberry marsh, the glen, the draw, the canon, the ravine, the forks, the bottom, or the settlement.

For the young American nobleman whose Jucal father made his money by inventing a

fluent pill, or who gained his great wealth through relieving humanity by means of a lung-pad, a liver-pad, a kidney-pad or a foot-pad, fox-hunting is first rate.

When Mark Twain was married, his bride's father bought and furnished a handsome house for the young pair. Twain knew nothing of it until after the wedding, when it was shown to him in all its completeness by a party of his wife's relatives, and, of course, his wife, who at length broke out, "It's our house—yours and mine—a present from father." He choked up, and, with tears in his eyes, stammered out to his father-in-law: "Mr. Langdon, whenever you are in Buffalo, if it's twice a year, come right up here and bring your bag with you. You may stay over night, if you want to. It shan't cost you a cent!"

"Mamma, do liars ever go to heaven?"

"Why, no, probably not."

"Has papa ever told a lie?"

"I suppose not; he may have."

"And, mamma, have you ever told one? Uncle Joseph has, and I have, and almost everybody."

"I don't know but I have sometimes."

"Well, it must be lonesome up there with only God and George Washington."

A REMARKABLE DREAM

MANY stories are told of children, but this strikes me as a remarkable one in many ways, not the least of which is that it is true.

This child was allowed to sit up one evening when there were guests at dinner. The child was five years old.

Her grandmother was her especial guardian in matters of conduct, and toward the middle of the dinner, feeling that the child had been up longer than was good for her, told her that she must say good-night and go up to bed.

The child did not show any ill-temper. She had been well brought up, and she left the table without any protest.

But the next morning at breakfast she complained to her mother that she had had such a terrible dream. Her mother and her grandmother tried to get her to tell what it was, but she hesitated. She did not want to tell her dream. Finally she said:

"I dreamed that I was dead."

Her mother was worried, and asked her to tell the rest of her dream.

"I dreamed that I was dead, and I went up to heaven and knocked at the gate. And then some one came to the gate, and he had keys in his hand, and so I knew it must be St. Peter"—the child had had Bible instruction—"and

St. Peter said, 'Well, little girl, what do you want here?'

"And I said, 'I died, and I've come up to heaven.'

"And St. Peter said: 'I'm sorry, little girl, but heaven's full. There isn't any room for you.'

"So I went away, and then I went down to hell, and knocked at the door. A man came to open the door—and he was a very nice looking man. 'Well,' he said, 'little girl, what are you coming here for?'

"And I said, 'I died, and I went up to heaven, and St. Peter said he couldn't let me in, and all that sort of thing, so I came here.'

"And the man was very nice. He said: 'Well, we'll find room for you, little girl. We've got a good many people here, but we'll find some place for you.' So I went in, and it seemed to be quite a pleasant place, and there were a good many people there. It didn't seem to be a very uncomfortable place. And the man took me to a room where there was a lounge against the wall, and he said, 'You can sit there on the lounge for a little while, but you can't stay very long, because we're saving this lounge for your grandmother.' "

Well, there was nothing to be said. It was her dream. They couldn't punish her. They just had to let it go—but I've never believed it *was* a dream.

DOCTOR CHARLES H. PARKHURST.

CHARLES F. BROWNE
("Artemus Ward")

AMONG THE SPIRITS

My naburs is mourn harf crazy on the new fangled idear about Sperrets. Sperretooul Sircles is held nitely & 4 or 5 long hared fellers has settled here and gone into the sperret biznis excloosively. A atemt was made to git Mrs. A. Ward to embark into the Sperret biznis but the atemt faled. 1 of the long hared fellers told her she was a ethereal creeter & wood make a sweet mejium, whareupon she attact him with a mop handle & drove him out of the house. I will hear obsarve that Mrs. Ward is a invalerble womun—the partner of my gois & the shairer of my sorrers. In my absunce she watchis my interests & things with a Eagle Eye & when I return she welcums me in afectionate stile. Trooly it is with us as it was with Mr. & Mrs. Ingomer in the Play, to whit—

> 2 soles with but a single thawt
> 2 harts which beet as 1.

My naburs injooced me to attend a Sperretooul Sircle at Squire Smith's. When I arrove I found the east room chock full, includin all the old maids in the villige & the long hared fellers a4sed. When I went in I was salootid with "hear cums the benited man"—"hear cums the

hory-heded unbeleever"—"hear cums the skoffer at trooth," etsettery, etsettery.

Sez I, "my frens, it's troo I'm hear, & now bring on your Sperrets."

1 of the long hared fellers riz up and sed he would state a few remarks. He sed man was a critter of intelleck & was movin on to a Gole. Sum men had bigger intellecks than other men had and they wood git to the Gole the soonerest. Sum men was beests & wood never git into the Gole at all. He sed the Erth was materiel but man was immateriel, and hens man was different from the Erth. The Erth, continnered the speeker, resolves round on its own axeltree onct in 24 hours, but as man haint gut no axeltree he cant resolve. He sed the ethereal essunce of the koordinate branchis of superhuman natur becum metty-morfussed as man progest in harmonial coexistunce & eventooally anty humanized theirselves & turned into regular sperretuellers. [This was versifferusly applauded by the cumpany, and as I make it a pint to get along as pleasant as possible I sung out "bully for you, old boy."]

The cumpany then drew round the table and the Sircle kommenst to go it. They axed me if thare was anybody in the Sperret land which I wood like to convarse with. I sed if Bill Tompkins, who was onct my partner in the show biznis, was sober, I should like to convarse with him a few periods.

"Is the Sperret of William Tompkins present?"

sed 1 of the long hared chaps, and there was three knox on the table.

Sez I, "William, how goze it, Old Sweetness?"

"Pretty ruff, old hoss," he replied.

That was a pleasant way we had of addressin each other when he was in the flesh.

"Air you in the show biznis, William?" sed I.

He sed he was. He sed he & John Bunyan was travelin with a side show in connection with Shakspere, Jonson & Co.'s Circus. He sed old Bun (meaning Mr. Bunyan) stired up the animils & ground the organ while he tended door. Occashunally Mr. Bunyan sung a comic song. The Circus was doin middlin well. Bill Shakspeer had made a grate hit with old Bob Ridley, and Ben Jonson was delitin the people with his trooly grate ax of hossmanship without saddul or bridal. They was rehersin Dixey's Land & expected it would knock the peple.

Sez I, "William, my luvly frend, can you pay me that 13 dollars you owe me?" He sed no with one of the most tremenjis knox I ever experienced.

The Sircle sed he had gone. "Are you gone, William?" I axed. "Rayther," he replied, and I knowd it was no use to pursoo the subjeck furder.

I then called for my father.

"How's things, daddy?"

"Middlin, my son, middlin."

"Ain't you proud of your orfurn boy?"

"Scacely."

"Why not, my parient?"

"Becawz you hav gone to writin for the noospapers, my son. Bimeby you'll lose all your character for trooth and verrasserty. When I helpt you into the show biznis I told you to dignerfy that there profeshun. Litteratoor is low."

He also statid that he was doin middlin well in the peanut bisnis & liked it putty well, tho' the climit was rather warm.

When the Sircle stopt they axed me what I thawt of it.

Sez I, "My friends I've bin into the show biznis now goin on 23 years. Theres a artikil in the Constittoshun of the United States which sez in effeck that everybody may think just as he darn pleases, & them is my sentiments to a hare. You dowtlis beleeve this Sperret doctrin while I think it is a little mixt. Just as soon as a man becums a reglar out & out Sperret rapper he leeves orf workin, lets his hare grow all over his fase & commensis spungin his livin out of other peple. He eats all the dickshunaries he can find & goze round chock full of big words, scarein the wimmin folks & little children & destroyin the peace of mind of every famerlee he enters. He don't do nobody no good & is a cuss to society & a pirit on honest peple's corn beef barrils. Admittin all you say abowt the doctrin to be troo, I must say the regular perfessional Sperret rappers—them as makes a biznis on it —air abowt the most

ornery set of cusses I ever enkountered in my life. So sayin I put on my surtoot and went home. Respectably Yures.

A certain eminent judge who was recently reëlected, when asked about the facility with which he turned from one case to another, replied that he had learned that from what he saw at a baptism of colored people when he was a boy. The weather was very cold, so that to immerse the candidates they were obliged to cut away the ice. It befell that when one of the female converts was dipped back into the water, the cold made her squirm about, and in a moment she had slipped from the preacher's hands and was down the stream under the ice. The preacher, however, was not disconcerted. Looking up with perfect calmness at the crowd on the bank, he said, "Brethren, this sister hath departed—hand me down another."

A Glens Falls teacher was trying to impress on the class the lessons of Washington's Birthday, and, among other questions, she asked:

"If the Southern Confederacy had succeeded, what would Washington have been the father of?"

"Twins," was the prompt reply of one of the boys.

THE LITTLE PEACH

A LITTLE peach in the orchard grew,
A little peach of emerald hue;
Warmed by the sun and wet by the dew
It grew.

One day, passing that orchard through,
That little peach dawned on the view
Of Johnny Jones and his sister Sue,
Them two.

Up at that peach a club they threw,
Down from the stem on which it grew
Fell that peach of emerald hue.
Mon Dieu

John took a bite and Sue a chew,
And then the trouble began to brew,
Trouble the doctor couldn't subdue.
Too true!

Under the turf where the daisies grew
They planted John and his sister Sue.
And their little souls to the angels flew,
Boo hoo!

What of that peach of the emerald hue;
Warmed by the sun and wet by the dew?
Ah, well, its mission on earth is through.
Adieu!

EUGENE FIELD.

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A GOOD REASON

To illustrate the position of one of the great national parties during a campaign noted for its fiery partizanship, Mr. Depew tells this story of the youthful politician and the woodchuck:

"The tutor in one of the smaller schools near my native town of Peekskill had drilled a number of his brightest scholars in the history of contemporary politics, and to test both their faith and their knowledge he called upon three of them one day and demanded a declaration of personal political principles.

" 'You are a Republican, Tom, are you not?'

" 'Yes, sir.'

" 'And Bill, you are a Prohibitionist, I believe?

" 'I am, sir.'

" 'And Jim, you are a Democrat?'

" 'Yes, sir.'

" 'Well, now, the one of you that can give me the best reason why he belongs to his party can have this woodchuck which I caught on my way to school this morning.'

" 'I am a Republican,' said the first boy, 'because the Republican party saved the country in the war and abolished slavery.'

" 'And Bill, why are you a Prohibitionist?'

" 'I am a Prohibitionist,' rattled off the youth, 'because rum is the country's greatest enemy and the cause of our overcrowded prisons and poorhouses.'

"'Excellent reasons, Bill!' remarked the tutor encouragingly. 'Now, why are you a Democrat, Jim?'

"'Well, sir,' was the slow reply, 'I am a Democrat because I want that woodchuck.'

"And he got it, too," added Mr. Depew.

Two war-time Senators abundantly endowed with humor were James W. Nesmith, of Oregon, and James A. McDougall, of California. McDougall's weakness was the bottle, and though he was wont to declare that he "never got drunk above his hatband," his bearing often belied his words. But, in liquor or out of it, his wit was ever uppermost, and he never missed an opportunity to coin a jest. When he left Washington at the close of his term a number of friends kept him company to the railroad station. Bidding good-bye to his clerk, he added mournfully:

"I am going back to Albany, where I was born, to die."

"But if you are sick, Senator," said the clerk, "why not remain here among your friends?"

"No, my son," was the reply, "I have reasoned it all out, and Albany is the choice." Then, pausing for a moment to note the glance of inquiry for the reason, he added, "Because I feel in my heart that I can leave Albany with less regret than any place I ever saw."

HENRY CUYLER BUNNER

THE LOVE LETTERS OF SMITH

When the little seamstress had climbed to her room in the story over the top story of the great brick tenement-house in which she lived, she was quite tired out. If you do not understand what a story over a top story is, you must remember that there are no limits to human greed, and hardly any to the height of tenement-houses. When the man who owned that seven-story tenement found that he could rent another floor, he found no difficulty in persuading the guardians of our building laws to let him clap another story on the roof, like a cabin on the deck of a ship; and in the southeasterly of the four apartments on this floor the little seamstress lived. You could just see the top of her window from the street—the huge cornice that had capped the original front, and that served as her window-sill now, quite hid all the lower part of the story on top of the top story.

The little seamstress was scarcely thirty years old, but she was such an old-fashioned little body in so many of her looks and ways that I had almost spelled her sempstress, after the fashion of our grandmothers. She had been a comely body, too; and would have been

still if she had not been thin and pale and anxious-eyed.

She was tired out to-night because she had been working hard all day for a lady who lived far up in the "new Wards" beyond Harlem River, and after the long journey home she had to climb seven flights of tenement-house stairs. She was too tired, both in body and in mind, to cook the two little chops she had brought home. She would save them for breakfast, she thought. So she made herself a cup of tea on the miniature stove, and ate a slice of dry bread with it. It was too much trouble to make toast.

But after dinner she watered her flowers. She was never too tired for that; and the six pots of geraniums that caught the south sun on the top of the cornice did their best to repay her. Then she sat down in her rocking-chair by the window and looked out. Her aerie was high above all the other buildings, and she could look across some low roofs opposite and see the farther end of Tompkins Square, with its sparse spring green showing faintly through the dusk. The eternal roar of the city floated up to her and vaguely troubled her. She was a country girl, and, although she had lived for ten years in New York, she had never grown used to that ceaseless murmur. To-night she felt the languor of the new season as well as the heaviness of physical exhaustion. She was almost too tired to go to bed.

She thought of the hard day done and the hard day to be begun after the night spent on the hard little bed. She thought of the peaceful days in the country, when she taught school in the Massachusetts village where she was born. She thought of a hundred small slights that she had to bear from people better fed than bred. She thought of the sweet green fields that she rarely saw nowadays. She thought of the long journey forth and back that must begin and end her morrow's work, and she wondered if her employer would think to offer to pay her fare. Then she pulled herself together. She must think of more agreeable things, or she could not sleep. And as the only agreeable things she had to think about were her flowers, she looked at the garden on top of the cornice.

A peculiar gritting noise made her look down, and she saw a cylindrical object, that glittered in the twilight, advancing in an irregular and uncertain manner toward her flower-pots. Looking closer, she saw that it was a pewter beer-mug, which somebody in the next apartment was pushing with a two-foot rule. On top of the beer-mug was a piece of paper, and on this paper was written, in a sprawling, half-formed hand:

porter
pleas excuse the libberty And
drink it

The seamstress started up in terror and shut the window. She remembered that there was a man in the next apartment. She had seen him on the stairs on Sundays. He seemed a grave, decent person; but—he must be drunk. She sat down on her bed, all a-tremble. Then she reasoned with herself. The man was drunk, that was all. He probably would not annoy her further. And if he did, she had only to retreat to Mrs. Mulvaney's apartment in the rear, and Mr. Mulvaney, who was a highly respectable man and worked in a boiler-shop, would protect her. So, being a poor woman—who had already had occasion to excuse—and refuse—two or three "liberties" of like sort, she had made up her mind to go to bed like a reasonable seamstress, and she did. She was rewarded, for when her light was out she could see in the moonlight that the two-foot rule appeared again, with one joint bent back, hitched itself into the mug handle and withdrew the mug.

The next day was a hard one for the little seamstress, and she hardly thought of the affair of the night before until the same hour had come and she sat once more by her window. Then she smiled at the remembrance.

"Poor fellow," she said in her charitable heart, "I've no doubt he's *awfully* ashamed of it now. Perhaps he was never tipsy before. Perhaps he didn't know there was a lone woman in here to be frightened."

Just then she heard a gritting sound. She looked down. The pewter pot was in front of her, and the two-foot rule was slowly retiring. On the pot was a piece of paper, and on the paper was:

porter
good for the helth
it makes meet

This time the little seamstress shut her window with a bang of indignation. The color rose to her pale cheeks. She thought that she would go down to see the janitor at once. Then she remembered the seven flights of stairs and she resolved to see the janitor in the morning. Then she went to bed and saw the mug drawn back just as it had been drawn back the night before.

The morning came, but somehow the seamstress did not care to complain to the janitor. She hated to make trouble—and the janitor might think—and—and—well, if the wretch did it again, she would speak to him herself and that would settle it.

And so, on the next night, which was a Thursday, the little seamstress sat down by her window, resolved to settle the matter. And she had not sat there long, rocking in the creaking little rocking-chair which she had brought with her from her old home, when the pewter pot hove in sight, with a piece of paper on the top.

This time the legend read:

Perhaps you are afrade i will
adress you
i am not that kind

The seamstress did not quite know whether to laugh or to cry. But she felt that the time had come for speech. She leaned out of her window and addressed the twilight heaven.

"Mr.—Mr.—sir—I—will you *please* put your head out of the window so that I can speak to you?"

The silence of the other room was undisturbed. The seamstress drew back, blushing. But before she could nerve herself for another attack, a piece of paper appeared on the end of the two-foot rule.

when i Say a thing i
mean it
i have Sed i would not
Adress you and i
Will not

What was the little seamstress to do? She stood by the window and thought hard about it. Should she complain to the janitor? But the creature was perfectly respectful. No doubt he meant to be kind. He certainly was kind, to waste these pots of porter on her. She remembered the last time—and the first—that she had drunk porter. It was at home, when she was a young girl, after she had had the diphtheria.

She remembered how good it was, and how it had given her back her strength. And without one thought of what she was doing, she lifted the pot of porter and took one little reminiscent sip—two little reminiscent sips—and became aware of her utter fall and defeat. She blushed now as she had never blushed before, put the pot down, closed the window, and fled to her bed like a deer to the woods.

And when the porter arrived the next night, bearing the simple appeal:

Don't be afrade of it
drink it all

the little seamstress arose and grasped the pot firmly by the handle and poured its contents over the earth around her largest geranium. She poured the contents out to the last drop, and then she dropped the pot and ran back and sat on her bed and cried, with her face hid in her hands.

"Now," she said to herself, "you've done it! And you're just as nasty and hard-hearted and suspicious and mean as—as pusley!"

And she wept to think of her hardness of heart. "He will never give me a chance to say I am sorry," she thought. And, really, she might have spoken kindly to the poor man and told him that she was much obliged to him, but that he really mustn't ask her to drink porter with him.

"But it's all over and done now," she said to herself as she sat at her window on Saturday night. And then she looked at the cornice and saw the faithful little pewter pot traveling slowly toward her.

She was conquered. This act of Christian forbearance was too much for her kindly spirit. She read the inscription on the paper:

porter is good for Flours
but better for Fokes

and she lifted the pot to her lips, which were not half so red as her cheeks, and took a good hearty, grateful draft.

She sipped in thoughtful silence after this first plunge, and presently she was surprised to find the bottom of the pot in full view.

On the table at her side a few pearl buttons were screwed up in a bit of white paper. She untwisted the paper and smoothed it out, and wrote in tremulous hand—she *could* write a very neat hand—

Thanks

This she laid on the top of the pot, and in a moment the bent two-foot rule appeared and drew the mail-carriage home. Then she sat still, enjoying the warm glow of the porter, which seemed to have permeated her entire being with a heat that was not at all like the

unpleasant and oppressive heat of the atmosphere, an atmosphere heavy with the spring damp. A gritting on the tin aroused her. A piece of paper lay under her eyes.

fine growing weather
Smith

it said.

Now it is unlikely that in the whole round and range of conversational commonplaces there was one other greeting that could have induced the seamstress to continue the exchange of communications. But this simple and homely phrase touched her country heart. What did "*growing weather*" matter to the toilers in this waste of brick and mortar? This stranger must be, like herself, a country-bred soul, longing for the new green and the upturned brown mold of the country fields. She took up the paper and wrote under the first message:

Fine

But that seemed curt; *for* she added: "*for*" what? She did not know. At last in desperation she put down *potatoes*. The piece of paper was withdrawn and came back with an addition:

Too mist for potatos.

And when the little seamstress had read this and grasped the fact that *m-i-s-t* represented

the writer's pronunciation of "moist," she laughed softly to herself. A man whose mind at such a time was seriously bent upon potatoes was not a man to be feared. She found a half sheet of note-paper, and wrote:

I lived in a small village before I came to New York, but I am afraid I do not know much about farming. Are you a farmer?

The answer came:

have ben most Every thing
farmed a Spel in Maine
Smith

As she read this, the seamstress heard a church clock strike nine.

"Bless me, is it so late?" she cried, and she hurriedly penciled *Good-night*, thrust the paper out, and closed the window. But a few minutes later, passing by, she saw yet another bit of paper on the cornice, fluttering in the evening breeze. It said only *good nite*, and after a moment's hesitation the little seamstress took it in and gave it shelter.

. . . . .

After this they were the best of friends. Every evening the pot appeared, and while the seamstress drank from it at her window, Mr. Smith drank from its twin at his; and notes were exchanged as rapidly as Mr. Smith's early

education permitted, They told each other their histories, and Mr. Smith's was one of travel and variety, which he seemed to consider quite a matter of course. He had followed the sea, he had farmed, he had been a logger and a hunter in the Maine woods. Now he was foreman of an East River lumber-yard, and he was prospering. In a year or two he would have enough laid by to go home to Bucksport and buy a share in a ship-building business. All this dribbled out in the course of a jerky but variegated correspondence, in which autobiographic details were mixed with reflections, moral and philosophical.

A few samples will give an idea of Mr. Smith's style:

i was one trip to van demens land

To which the seamstress replied:

It must have been very interesting.

But Mr. Smith disposed of this subject very briefly:

it wornt

Further he vouchsafed:

i seen a chinese cook in hong kong could cook flapjacks like your Mother

a mishnery that sells Rum
is the menest of Gods crechers

a bulfite is not what it is
cract up to Be

the dagos are wussen the
brutes

i am 6 1¾
but my Father was 6 *foot* 4

The seamstress had taught school one winter, and she could not refrain from making an attempt to reform Mr. Smith's orthography. One evening, in answer to this communication:

i killed a Bare in Maine 600
lbs. waight

she wrote:

Isn't it generally spelled Bear?

but she gave up the attempt when he responded:

a bare is a mene animle any
way you spel him

The spring wore on, and the summer came, and still the evening drink and the evening correspondence brightened the close of each

day for the little seamstress. And the draft of porter put her to sleep each night, giving her a calmer rest than she had ever known during her stay in the noisy city; and it began, moreover, to make a little "*meet*" for her. And then the thought that she was going to have an hour of pleasant companionship somehow gave her courage to cook and eat her little dinner, however tired she was. The seamstress's cheeks began to blossom with the June roses.

And all this time Mr. Smith kept his vow of silence unbroken, though the seamstress sometimes tempted him with little ejaculations and exclamations to which he might have responded. He was silent and invisible. Only the smoke of his pipe, and the clink of his mug as he sat it down on the cornice, told her that a living, material Smith was her correspondent. They never met on the stairs, for their hours of coming and going did not coincide. Once or twice they passed each other in the street—but Mr. Smith looked straight ahead of him, about a foot over her head. The little seamstress thought he was a very fine-looking man, with his six feet one and three-quarters and his thick brown beard. Most people would have called him plain.

Once she spoke to him. She was coming home one summer evening, and a gang of corner loafers stopped her and demanded money to buy beer, as is their custom. Before she had time to be frightened, Mr. Smith appeared—

whence, she knew not—scattered the gang like chaff, and, collaring two of the human hyenas, kicked them, with deliberate, ponderous, alternate kicks, until they writhed in ineffable agony. When he let them crawl away she turned to him and thanked him warmly, looking very pretty now, with the color in her cheeks. But Mr. Smith answered no word. He stared over her head, grew red in the face, fidgeted nervously, but held his peace until his eyes fell on a rotund Teuton passing by.

"Say, Dutchy!" he roared.

The German stood aghast.

"I ain't got nothing to write with!" thundered Mr. Smith, looking him in the eye. And then the man of his word passed on his way.

And so the summer went on, and the two correspondents chatted silently from window to window, hid from sight of all the world below by the friendly cornice. And they looked out over the roof and saw the green of Tompkins Square grow darker and dustier as the months went on.

Mr. Smith was given to Sunday trips into the suburbs, and he never came back without a bunch of daisies or black-eyed Susans or, later, asters or goldenrod for the little seamstress. Sometimes, with a sagacity rare in his sex, he brought her a whole plant, with fresh loam for potting.

He gave her also a reel in a bottle, which, he wrote, he had "*maid*" himself, and some

coral, and a dried flying-fish that was somewhat fearful to look upon, with its swordlike fins and its hollow eyes. At first she could not go to sleep with that flying-fish hanging on the wall.

But he surprised the little seamstress very much one cool September evening, when he shoved this letter along the cornice:

Respected and Honored Madam:

Having long and vainly sought an opportunity to convey to you the expression of my sentiments, I now avail myself of the privilege of epistolary communication to acquaint you with the fact that the Emotions, which you have raised in my breast, are those which should point to Connubial Love and Affection rather than to simple Friendship. In short, Madam, I have the Honor to approach you with a Proposal, the acceptance of which will fill me with ecstatic Gratitude, and enable me to extend to you those Protecting Cares, which the Matrimonial Bond makes at once the Duty and the Privilege of him, who would, at no distant date, lead to the Hymeneal Altar one whose charms and virtues should suffice to kindle its Flames, without extraneous Aid.

I remain, Dear Madam,
Your Humble Servant and
Ardent Adorer, J. Smith.

The little seamstress gazed at this letter a long time. Perhaps she was wondering in

what Ready Letter-Writer of the last century Mr. Smith had found his form. Perhaps she was amazed at the results of his first attempt at punctuation. Perhaps she was thinking of something else, for there were tears in her eyes and a smile on her small mouth.

But it must have been a long time, and Mr. Smith must have grown nervous, for presently another communication came along the line where the top of the cornice was worn smooth It read:

If not understood will you
marry me

The little seamstress seized a piece of paper and wrote:

If I say Yes, will you speak to me?

Then she rose and passed it out to him, leaning out of the window, and their faces met.

Sunday-school Superintendent: "Who led the children of Israel into Canaan? Will one of the smaller boys answer?"

No reply.

Superintendent (somewhat sternly): "Can no one tell? Little boy on that seat next to the aisle, who led the children of Israel into Canaan?"

Little Boy (badly frightened): "It wasn't me. I—I just moved yere last week f'm Mizzoury."

FRANK R. STOCKTON

A PIECE OF RED CALICO

Mr. Editor: If the following true experience shall prove of any advantage to any of your readers I shall be glad.

I was going into town the other morning, when my wife handed me a little piece of red calico and asked me if I would have time during the day to buy her two yards and a half of calico like that. I assured her that it would be no trouble at all; and putting the piece of calico in my pocket, I took the train for the city.

At lunch time I stopped in at a large dry-goods store to attend to my wife's commission. I saw a well-dressed man walking the floor between the counters, where long lines of girls were waiting on much longer lines of customers, and asked him where I could see some red calico.

"This way, sir," and he led me up the store.

"Miss Stone," said he to a young lady, "show this gentleman some red calico."

"What shade do you want?" asked Miss Stone.

I showed her the little piece of calico that my wife had given me. She looked at it and

handed it back to me. Then she took down a great roll of red calico and spread it out on the counter.

"Why, that isn't the shade!" said I.

"No, not exactly," said she; "but it is prettier than your sample."

"That may be," said I; "but, you see, I want to match this piece. There is something already made of this kind of calico which needs to be made larger, or mended, or something. I want some calico of the same shade."

The girl made no answer, but took down another roll.

"That's the shade," said she.

"Yes," I replied, "but it's striped."

"Stripes are more worn than anything else in calicoes," said she.

"Yes; but this isn't to be worn. It's for furniture, I think. At any rate, I want perfectly plain stuff, to match something already in use."

"Well, I don't think you can find it perfectly plain unless you get Turkey-red."

"What is Turkey-red?" I asked.

"Turkey-red is perfectly plain in calicoes," she answered.

"Well, let me see some."

"We haven't any Turkey-red calico left," she said, "but we have some very nice plain calicoes in other colors."

"I don't want any other color. I want stuff to match this."

"It's hard to match cheap calico like that," she said, and so I left her.

I next went into a store a few doors farther up Broadway. When I entered I approached the "floorwalker," and, handing him my sample, said:

"Have you any calico like this?"

"Yes, sir," said he. "Third counter to the right."

I went to the third counter to the right and showed my sample to the salesman in attendance there. He looked at it on both sides. Then he said:

"We haven't any of this."

"That gentleman said you had," said I.

"We had it, but we're out of it now. You'll get that goods at an upholsterer's."

I went across the street to an upholsterer's.

"Have you any stuff like this?" I asked.

"No," said the salesman, "we haven't. Is it for furniture?"

"Yes," I replied.

"Then Turkey-red is what you want?"

"Is Turkey-red just like this?" I asked.

"No," said he, "but it's much better."

"That makes no difference to me," I replied. "I want something just like this."

"But they don't use that for furniture," he said.

"I should think people could use anything they wanted for furniture," I remarked, somewhat sharply.

"They can, but they don't," he said quite calmly. "They don't use red like that. They use Turkey-red."

I said no more, but left. The next place I visited was a very large dry-goods store. Of the first salesman I saw I inquired if they kept red calico like my sample.

"You'll find that on the second story," said he.

I went upstairs. There I asked a man:

"Where will I find red calico?"

"In the far room to the left. Right over there." And he pointed to a distant corner.

I walked through the crowds of purchasers and salespeople and around the counters and tables filled with goods, to the far room to the left. When I got there I asked for red calico.

"The second counter down this side," said the man.

I went there and produced my sample. "Calicoes downstairs," said the man.

"They told me they were up here," I said.

"Not these plain goods. You'll find 'em downstairs at the back of the store, over on that side."

I went downstairs to the back of the store.

"Where will I find red calico like this?" I asked.

"Next counter but one," said the man addressed, walking with me in the direction pointed out. "Dunn, show red calicoes."

Mr. Dunn took my sample and looked at it.

"We haven't this shade in that quality of goods," he said.

"Well, have you it in any quality of goods?" I asked.

"Yes; we've got it finer." And he took down a piece of calico and unrolled a yard or two of it on the counter.

"That's not this shade," I said.

"No," said he. "The goods is finer and the color's better."

"I want it to match this," I said.

"I thought you weren't particular about the match," said the salesman. "You said you didn't care for the quality of the goods, and you know you can't match goods without you take into consideration quality and color both. If you want that quality of goods in red you ought to get Turkey-red."

I did not think it necessary to answer this remark, but said:

"Then you've got nothing to match this?"

"No, sir. But perhaps they may have it in the upholstery department, in the sixth story."

So I got in the elevator and went up to the top of the house.

"Have you any red stuff like this?" I said to a young man.

"Red stuff? Upholstery department—other end of this floor."

I went to the other end of the floor.

"I want some red calico," I said to a man.

"Furniture goods?" he asked.

"Yes," said I.

"Fourth counter to the left."

I went to the fourth counter to the left and showed my sample to a salesman. He looked at it and said:

"You'll get this down on the first floor—calico department."

I turned on my heel, descended in the elevator, and went out on Broadway. I was thoroughly sick of red calico. But I determined to make one more trial. My wife had bought her red calico not long before, and there must be some to be had somewhere. I ought to have asked her where she bought it, but I thought a simple little thing like that could be bought anywhere. I went into another large dry-goods store. As I entered the door a sudden tremor seized me. I could not bear to take out that piece of red calico. If I had had any other kind of a rag about me—a pen-wiper or anything of the sort—I think I would have asked them if they could match that.

But I stepped up to a young woman and presented my sample, with the usual question.

"Back room, counter on the left," she said. I went there.

"Have you any red calico like this?" I asked of the lady behind the counter.

"No, sir," she said; "but we have it in Turkey-red."

Turkey-red again! I surrendered.

"All right," I said; "give me Turkey-red."

"How much, sir?" she asked.

"I don't know—say five yards."

The lady looked at me rather strangely, but measured off five yards of Turkey-red calico. Then she rapped on the counter and called out "Oash!" A little girl, with yellow hair in two long plaits, came slowly up. The lady wrote the number of yards, the name of the goods, her own number, the price, the amount of the bank-note I handed her, and some other matters, probably the color of my eyes and the direction and velocity of the wind, on a slip of paper. She then copied all this in a little book which she kept by her. Then she handed the slip of paper, the money and the Turkey-red to the yellow-haired girl. This young girl copied the slip in a little book she carried, and then she went away with the calico, the paper slip, and the money.

After a very long time—during which the little girl probably took the goods, the money and the slip to some central desk, where the note was received, its amount and number entered in a book, change given to the girl, a copy of the slip made and entered, girl's entry examined and approved, goods wrapped up, girl registered, plaits counted and entered on a slip of paper and copied by the girl in her book, girl taken to a hydrant and washed, number of towel entered on a paper slip and copied by the girl in her book, value of my note and amount of

change branded somewhere on the child, and said process noted on a slip of paper and copied in her book—the girl came to me, bringing my change and the package of Turkey-red calico.

I had time for but very little work at the office that afternoon, and when I reached home I handed the package of calico to my wife. She unrolled it and exclaimed:

"Why, this don't match the piece I gave you!"

"Match it!" I cried. "Oh, no! it doesn't match it. You didn't want that matched. You were mistaken. What you wanted was Turkey-red—third counter to the left. I mean, Turkey-red is what they use."

My wife looked at me in amazement, and then I detailed to her my troubles.

"Well," said she, "this Turkey-red is a great deal prettier than what I had, and you've got so much of it that I needn't use the other after all. I wish I had thought of Turkey-red before."

"I wish from my heart you had," said I.

ANDREW SCOGGIN.

—*The Lady or the Tiger, and Other Stories.*

FRANCIS BRET HARTE

HER LETTER

I'm sitting alone by the fire,
Dressed just as I came from the dance,
In a robe even *you* would admire—
It cost a cool thousand in France;
I'm be-diamonded out of all reason,
My hair is done up in a cue:
In short, sir, "the belle of the season"
Is wasting an hour on you.

A dozen engagements I've broken;
I left in the midst of a set,
Likewise a proposal, half-spoken,
That waits—on the stairs—for me yet.
They say he'll be rich—when he grows up
And then he adores me indeed.
And you, sir, are turning your nose up,
Three thousand miles off, as you read.

"And how do I like my position?"
"And what do I think of New York?"
"And now, in my higher ambition,
With whom do I waltz, flirt, or talk?"
"And isn't it nice to have riches,
And diamonds and silks, and all that?"
"And isn't it a change to the ditches
And tunnels of Poverty Flat?"

Well, yes—if you saw us out driving
Each day in the Park, four-in-hand—
If you saw poor dear mamma contriving
To look supernaturally grand—
If you saw papa's picture, as taken
By Brady, and tinted at that—
You'd never suspect he sold bacon
And flour at Poverty Flat.

And yet, just this moment, when sitting
In the glare of the grand chandelier—
In the bustle and glitter befitting
The "finest *soirée* of the year"—
In the mists of a *gaze de Chambery*,
And the hum of the smallest of talk—
Somehow, Joe, I thought of the "Ferry"
And the dance that we had on "The Fork";

Of Harrison's barn, with its muster
Of flags festooned over the wall;
Of the candles that shed their soft luster
And tallow on head-dress and shawl;
Of the steps that we took to one fiddle;
Of the dress of my queer *vis-à-vis*,
And how I once went down the middle
With the man that shot Sandy McGee;

Of the moon that was quietly sleeping
On the hill, when the time came to go;
Of the few baby peaks that were peeping
From under their bedclothes of snow;

Her Letter

Of that ride—that to me was the rarest;
  Of—the something you said at the gate.
Ah, Joe, then I wasn't an heiress
  To "the best-paying lead in the State!"

Well, well, it's all past; yet it's funny
  To think, as I stood in the glare
Of fashion and beauty and money,
  That I should be thinking, right there,
Of someone who breasted high water,
  And swam the North Fork, and all that,
Just to dance with old Folinsbee's daughter,
  The Lily of Poverty Flat.

But goodness! what nonsense I'm writing!
  (Mamma says my taste still is low),
Instead of my triumphs reciting,
  I'm spooning on Joseph—heigh-ho!
And I'm to be "finished" by travel—
  Whatever's the meaning of that—
Oh! why did papa strike pay gravel
  In drifting on Poverty Flat?

Good night—here's the end of my paper;
  Good night—if the longitude please—
For maybe, while wasting my taper,
  Your sun's climbing over the trees.
But know, if you haven't got riches,
  And are poor, dearest Joe, and all that,
That my heart's somewhere there in the ditches
  And you've struck it—on Poverty Flat.

—*Complete Poetical Works.*

A WARM WELCOME

It was a new town in the West, and after breakfast I wandered up and down the one long street to find the office of the local weekly paper. By and by I came to a shanty with the sign of the *Herald* over the door, but the door stood open, the windows were out, and it was plain that a removal had taken place.

"Who you lookin' for?" gruffly inquired the saloon man next door.

"For the editor."

"He's over thar!"

"Over where?"

"Can't you see that fenced-in place over thar?"

"Certainly. Looks to me like a graveyard."

"And so it is, and that's where he's planted! You ar' speakin' of the last one, I take it?"

"Has more than one been planted around here?"

"I should gurgle that there had! Let's see! One—two—three—four—five—— Hold on a minit! Hello, Hank!"

Hank came across the street, and the saloonist asked:

"How many of those newspaper critters hev been planted around here?"

"Six!" was the prompt reply, "and they say thar's another cayuse in town smellin' around to start another paper. I'm jest lookin' him up! Is this the feller?"

"Oh, no!" I replied in my softest tones. "I'm either going to start a saloon or a faro bank. I was just inquiring out of curiosity."

"Then that's all right, and we'll drink at your expense. Any legitimate business is welcome here, but the critter who comes along with a newspaper hurts our feelin's and insults our manhood, and has to dodge or drop. Saloon or faro, eh? Better make it faro, 'cause we are long on saloons and short on faros jest now. Glad to meet you. Allus does me good to shake hands with a newcomer who has the interest of this town at heart!"

The other day a great, gaunt colored man entered the express office, and, edging up to the man in charge, took off his hat and asked if there had been anything received for George Washington.

The clerk looked at the man searchingly and then with a knowing air remarked:

"Ah, what game are you trying to work on me now? He's been dead long ago."

This story is much the same as the story about the Congressman who declared in an address to the House:

"As Daniel Webster says in his great dictionary——"

"It was Noah who wrote the dictionary," whispered a colleague, who sat at the next desk.

"Noah, nothing," replied the speaker. "Noah built the ark."

THE HEIGHT OF THE RIDICULOUS

I WROTE some lines once on a time,
In wondrous merry mood,
And thought, as usual, men would say
They were exceeding good.

They were so queer, so very queer,
I laughed as I would die;
Albeit, in the general way,
A sober man am I.

I called my servant, and he came;
How kind it was of him,
To mind a slender man like me,
He of the mighty limb!

"These to the printer," I exclaimed
And, in my humorous way,
I added (as a trifling jest),
"There'll be the devil to pay."

He took the paper, and I watched,
And saw him peep within;
At the first line he read, his face
Was all upon the grin.

He read the next: the grin grew broad,
And shot from ear to ear;
He read the third: a chuckling noise
I now began to hear.

The Height of the Ridiculous

The fourth: he broke into a roar;
The fifth: his waistband split;
The sixth: he burst five buttons off,
And tumbled in a fit.

Ten days and nights, with sleepless eye
I watched that wretched man,
And since, I never dare to write,
As funny as I can.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

A story comes from Kansas, where the Farmers' Alliance and its platform of principles were once the chief topics of conversation. A man of rather questionable character died in a remote part of Waterloo township. The nearest preacher was summoned to preach a funeral sermon. Not knowing the man, the preacher contented himself with a few general remarks on the solemn nature of the occasion, and then said he would be glad to have any of the company present say a word about the dead man, if they desired. No one moved or spoke, and again the preacher extended an invitation to the company to offer remarks, but again his invitation met with silence. Finally an old farmer, who sat in the corner of the front room, rose and said: "If no one has any remarks to make about the deceased, I would like to make a few remarks about the Alliance's sub-treasury plan."

FIELD'S LITTLE JOKE

In 1884, the present writer, then an editorial writer for the Chicago *Daily News*, did his work in the same room where Mr. Eugene Field wrote those graceful verses and irresistibly funny paragraphs which made the "Sharps and Flats" column of that journal so eagerly sought for. Both occupants of the room were frequently subject to visits from acquaintances who chanced to be in the city for the day, so they contrived a number of practical jokes intended to increase the respect which some of these lay brethren had for newspaper writers in general and for these two in particular. One day an acquaintance of Mr. Field's boyhood, a tall, gangling-looking Missourian, came in and made himself known. After cordial greetings and a few moments of conversation, Mr. Field clapped his hand to his brow, assumed a wild expression, and speaking sharply to his room-mate as if he were an amanuensis, said, "Take this poem down."

The amanuensis cleared the deck of his desk for action and Mr. Field began to dictate a poem. It was a beautiful little lyric upon which he had devoted weeks of painstaking work, but he reeled it off as if it had just popped into his mind, and, to increase the wonderment in the mind of his guest, turned two or three

times in the course of the dictation and chatted with him about their boyhood frolics. The eyes of the Missourian stood out in amazement, as, at the close of the dictation, the amanuensis read the charmingly finished poem, and Mr. Field in a tone of command, said:

"Send it up to the printer. Have it put in to-morrow morning's paper."

The next morning the Missourian, proud of his acquaintance with so wonderful a man as Mr. Field had showed himself to be, read the poem, and set out to tell everybody who would listen how an inspired genius writes poetry.

In the Silver Bow Club in Helena they used to play big poker. At the game one day sat Marcus Daly, Senator Hearst and J. B. Haggin, when there burst in a radiant New York drummer who had a two weeks' card to the institution. He marched up to the players and politely inquired if he might take a hand.

"Why, yes; come right in," said Daly.

The drummer pulled out a roll of bills and threw a hundred-dollar note on the table. "Let me have chips for that," he said grandly. He went to hang up his coat and hat. When he returned the bill still lay on the table.

"What's the matter, gentlemen?" the traveling man haughtily inquired; "ain't my money good?"

"Why, yes, to be sure," said Daly. "Hearst, give the gentleman one white chip."

HIS LAST REQUEST

Ex-Vice-President Stevenson told a story about his friend Joe Blackburn that is said to have nettled the Senator because it came too near to the facts for mutual enjoyment. In early manhood, it is said, the Senator was not conspicuously retiring or reticent to such a degree that it required more than one yoke of oxen to draw from him an opinion upon any public question at any time whatsoever. Mr. Stevenson said that once when a celebrated desperado was to be publicly executed in Kentucky, Joe Blackburn then a rising politician, chanced to be among the spectators. Before the sheriff adjusted the noose to the neck of the condemned man he tendered him the customary privilege of making any dying observations he might desire to for the benefit of his hearers.

"I don't think I've got any remarks that——" the man began to say, when he was cut short by a loud, cheerful voice shouting:

"Say, Bill, if you hain't got anything special to talk about, I wish you would give me about fifteen minutes of your time just to let me say to these good people that I am a candidate for their suffrages, and to show some reasons why——"

"Hold on," said the desperado. "Sheriff, who is this man?"

"That's Blackburn."

"What Blackburn? Joe Blackburn?"

"Yes."

"I thought so. Give him my time. Give him all of it. But go ahead and hang me first and make Blackburn talk afterward."

"I hear you have a little sister at your house," said a Chicago grocer to a small boy the other day.

"Yes, sir," said Johnny.

"Do you like that?" was queried.

"I wish it was a boy," said Johnny, "so I could play mibs with him, an' baseball, an' tag, an' all those things when he got bigger."

"Well," said the storekeeper, "why don't you exchange your little sister for a boy?"

Johnny reflected for a minute, then he said, rather sorrowfully: "We can't now. It's too late. We've used her four days."

President Lincoln once wrote to General McClellan, when the latter was in command of the army. General McClellan, as is well known, conducted a waiting campaign, being so careful not to make any mistakes that he made very little headway. President Lincoln sent this brief but exceedingly pertinent letter:

"*My Dear McClellan:* If you don't want to use the army, I should like to borrow it for awhile. Yours respectfully, A. LINCOLN."

EDWARD EVERETT HALE

MY DOUBLE AND HOW HE UNDID ME

It is not often that I trouble the readers of the *Atlantic Monthly*. I should not trouble them now, but for the importunities of my wife, who "feels to insist" that a duty to society is unfulfilled till I have told why I had to have a double, and how he undid me. She is sure, she says, that intelligent persons cannot understand that pressure upon public servants which alone drives any man into the employment of a double. And while I fear she thinks, at the bottom of her heart, that my fortunes will never be remade, she has a faint hope that, as another Rasselas, I may teach a lesson to future publics from which they may profit, though we die. Owing to the behavior of my double, or, if you please, to that public pressure which compelled me to employ him, I have plenty of leisure to write this communication.

I am, or rather was, a minister, of the Sandemanian connection. I was settled in the active, wide-awake town of Naguadavick, on one of the finest water-powers in Maine. We used to call it a Western town in the heart of the civilization of New England. A charming place it was and is. A spirited, brave young parish had

I, and it seemed as if we might have all "the joy of eventful living" to our heart's content.

Alas! how little we knew on the day of my ordination, and in those halcyon moments of our first housekeeping. To be the confidential friend of a hundred families in the town—cutting the social trifle, as my friend Haliburton says, "from the top of the whipped syllabub to the bottom of the sponge-cake, which is the foundation"—to keep abreast of the thought of the age in one's study, and to do one's best on Sunday to interweave that thought with the active life of an active town, and to inspirit both and to make both infinite by glimpses of the Eternal Glory, seemed such an exquisite forelook into one's life! Enough to do, and all so real and so grand! If this vision could only have lasted!

The truth is, this vision was not in itself a delusion, nor, indeed, half bright enough. If one could only have been left to do his own business, the vision would have accomplished itself and brought out new paraheliacal visions, each as bright as the original. The misery was, and is, as we found out, I and Polly, before long, that besides the vision, and besides the usual human and finite failures in life (such as breaking the old pitcher that came over in the *Mayflower*, and putting into the fire the Alpenstock with which her father climbed Mont Blanc)—besides these, I say (imitating the style of Robinson Crusoe), there were pitchforked in on us a great rowen-heap of humbugs,

handed down from some unknown seed-time, in which we were expected, and I chiefly, to fulfil certain public functions before the community, of the character of those fulfilled by the third row of supernumeraries who stand behind the Sepoys in the spectacle of the "Cataract of the Ganges." They were the duties, in a word, which one performs as member of one or another social class or subdivsion, wholly distinct from what one does as A. by himself A. What invisible power put these functions on me it would be very hard to tell. But such power there was and is. And I had not been at work a year before I found I was living two lives, one real and one merely functional—for two sets of people, one my parish, whom I loved, and the other a vague public, for whom I did not care two straws. All this was a vague notion, which everybody had and has, that this second life would eventually bring out some great results, unknown at present, to somebody somewhere.

Crazed by this duality of life, I first read Doctor Wigan on the "Duality of the Brain," hoping that I could train one side of my head to do these outside jobs, and the other to do my intimate and real duties. . . . But Doctor Wigan does not go into these niceties of this subject, and I failed. It was then that, on my wife's suggestion, I resolved to look out for a Double.

I was at first singularly successful. We

happened to be recreating at Stafford Springs that summer. We rode out one day, for one of the relaxations of that watering place, to the great Monson Poorhouse. We were passing through one of the large halls when my destiny was fulfilled!

He was not shaven. He had on no spectacles. He was dressed in a green baize roundabout and faded blue overalls, worn sadly at the knee. But I saw at once that he was of my height—five feet four and a half. He had black hair, worn off by his hat. So have and have not I. He stooped in walking. So do I. His hands were large, and mine. And—choicest gift of Fate in all—he had, not "a strawberry-mark on his left arm," but a cut from a juvenile brickbat over his right eye, slightly affecting the play of that eyebrow. Reader, so have I! My fate was sealed!

A word with Mr. Holly, one of the inspectors settled the whole thing. It proved that this Dennis Shea was a harmless, amiable fellow, of the class known as shiftless, who had sealed his fate by marrying a dumb wife, who was at that moment ironing in the laundry. Before I left Stafford I had hired both for five years. We had applied to Judge Pynchon, then the probate judge at Springfield, to change the name of Dennis Shea to Frederic Ingham. We had explained to the judge, what was the precise truth, that an eccentric gentleman wished to adopt Dennis, under his new name,

into his family. It never occurred to him that Dennis might be more than fourteen years old. And thus, to shorten this preface, when we returned at night to my parsonage at Naguadavick, there entered Mrs. Ingham, her new dumb laundress, myself, who am Mr. Frederic Ingham, and my double, who was Mr. Frederic Ingham, by as good right as I.

Oh, the fun we had the next morning in shaving his beard to my pattern, cutting his hair to match mine, and teaching him how to wear and how to take off gold-bowed spectacles! Really, they were electro-plate, and the glass was plain (for the poor fellow's eyes were excellent). Then in four successive afternoons I taught him four speeches. I had found these would be quite enough for the supernumerary-Sepoy line of life, and it was well for me they were; for though he was good-natured, he was very shiftless, and it was, as our national proverb says, "like pulling teeth" to teach him. But at the end of the next week he could say, with quite my easy and frisky air:

1. "Very well, thank you. And you?" This for an answer to casual salutations.

2. "I am very glad you liked it."

3. "There has been so much said, and, on the whole, so well said, that I will not occupy the time."

4. "I agree, in general, with my friend the other side of the room."

At first I had a feeling that I was going to

be at great cost for clothing him. But it proved, of course, at once, that, whenever he was out, I should be at home. And I went, during the bright period of his success, to so few of those awful pageants which require a black dress-coat and what the ungodly call, after Mr. Dickens, a white choker, that in the happy retreat of my own dressing-gowns and jackets my days went by as happily and cheaply as those of another Thalaba. And Polly declares there never was a year when the tailoring cost so little. He lived (Dennis, not Thalaba) in his wife's room over the kitchen. He had orders never to show himself at that window. When he appeared in the front of the house, I retired to my sanctissimum and my dressing-gown. In short, the Dutchman and his wife, in the old weather-box, had not less to do with each other than he and I. He made the furnace fire and split the wood before daylight; then he went to sleep again, and slept late; then came for orders, with a red silk bandanna tied round his head, with his overalls on, and his dress-coat and spectacles off. If we happened to be interrupted, no one guessed that he was Frederic Ingham as well as I: and in the neighborhood there grew up an impression that the minister's Irishman worked daytimes in the factory village at New Coventry. After I had given him his orders, I never saw him till the next day.

I launched him by sending him to a meeting

of the Enlightenment Board. The Enlightenment Board consists of seventy-four members, of whom sixty-seven are necessary to form a quorum. . . . At this particular time we had had four successive meetings, averaging four hours each—wholly occupied in whipping in a quorum. At the first only eleven men were present; at the next, by force of three circulars, twenty-seven; at the third, thanks to two days' canvassing by Auchmuty and myself, begging men to come, we had sixty. Half the others were in Europe. But without a quorum we could do nothing. All the rest of us waited grimly for four hours and adjourned without any action. At the fourth meeting we had flagged, and only got fifty-nine together.

But on the first appearance of my double—whom I sent on this fatal Monday to the fifth meeting—he was the *sixty-seventh* man who entered the room. He was greeted with a storm of applause! The poor fellow had missed his way—read the street signs ill through his spectacles (very ill, in fact, without them)—and had not dared to inquire. He entered the room—finding the president and secretary holding to their chairs two judges of the Supreme Court, who were also members *ex officio*, and were begging leave to go away. On his entrance all was changed. *Presto*, the by-laws were suspended, and the Western property was given away. Nobody stopped to converse with him. He voted, as I had charged him to do,

in every instance, with the minority. I won new laurels as a man of sense, though a little unpunctual—and Dennis, *alias* Ingham, returned to the parsonage, astonished to see with how little wisdom the world is governed. He cut a few of my parishioners in the street; but he had his glasses off, and I am known to be near-sighted. Eventually he recognized them more readily than I. . . .

After this he went to several Commencements for me, and ate the dinners provided; he sat through three of our Quarterly Conventions for me—always voting judiciously, by the simple rules mentioned above, of siding with the minority. And I meanwhile, who had before been losing caste among my friends, as holding myself aloof from the association of the body, began to rise in everybody's favor. "Ingham's a good fellow—always on hand"; "never talks much, but does the right thing at the right time;" "is not as unpunctual as he used to be—he comes early, and sits through to the end." "He has got over his old talkative habit, too. I spoke to a friend of his about it once; and I think Ingham took it kindly," etc., etc.

. . . Polly is more rash than I am, as the reader has observed in the outset of this memoir. She risked Dennis one night under the eyes of her own sex. Governor Gorges had always been very kind to us, and, when he gave his great annual party to the town, asked us.

I confess I hated to go. I was deep in the new volume of Pfeiffer's "Mystics," which Haliburton had just sent me from Boston. "But how rude," said Polly, "not to return the Governor's civility and Mrs. George's, when they will be sure to ask why you are away" Still I demurred, and at last she, with the wit of Eve and of Semiramis conjoined, let me off by saying that, if I would go in with her and sustain the initial conversations with the Govenor and the ladies staying there, she would risk Dennis for the rest of the evening. And that was just what we did. She took Dennis in training all that afternoon, instructed him in fashionable conversation, cautioned him against the temptations of the supper table—and at nine in the evening he drove us all down in the carryall. I made the grand star *entrée* with Polly and the pretty Walton girls, who were staying with us. We had put Dennis into a great rough top-coat, without his glasses; and the girls never dreamed, in the darkness, of looking at him. He sat in the carriage, at the door, while we entered. I did the agreeable to Mrs. Gorges, was introduced to her niece, Miss Fernanda; I complimented Judge Jeffries on his decision in the great case of D'Aulnay *vs.* Laconia Mining Company; I stepped into the dressing-room for a moment, stepped out for another, walked home after a nod with Dennis and tying the horse to a pump; and while I walked home, Mr. Frederic Ingham, my double, stepped in

through the library into the Gorges's grand saloon.

Oh! Polly died of laughing as she told me of it at midnight! And even here, where I have to teach my hands to hew the beech for stakes to fence our cave, she dies of laughing as she recalls it—and says that single occasion was worth all we have paid for it. Gallant Eve that she is! She joined Dennis at the library door, and in an instant presented him to Doctor Ochterlony, from Baltimore, who was on a visit in town, and was talking with her as Dennis came in. "Mr. Ingham would like to hear what you were telling us about your success among the German population." And Dennis bowed and said, in spite of a scowl from Polly, "I'm very glad you liked it." But Doctor Ochterlony did not observe, and plunged into the tide of explanation; Dennis listened like a prime minister, and bowing like a mandarin, which is, I suppose, the same thing. . . . So was it that before Doctor Ochterlony came to the "success," or near it. Governor Gorges came to Dennis and asked him to hand Mrs. Jeffries down to supper, a request which he heard with great joy.

Polly was skipping round the room, I guess, gay as a lark. Auchmuty came to her "in pity for poor Ingham," who was so bored by the stupid pundit—and Auchmuty could not understand why I stood it so long. But when Dennis took Mrs. Jeffries down, Polly could not resist standing near them. He was a little flustered,

till the sight of the eatables and drinkables gave him the same Mercian courage which it gave Diggory. A little excited then, he attempted one or two of his speeches to the Judge's lady: But little he knew how hard it was to get in even a *promptu* there edgewise. "Very well, I thank you," said he, after the eating elements were adjusted; "and you?" And then did not he have to hear about the mumps, and the measles, and arnica, and belladonna, and camomile flower, and dodecatheon, till she changed oysters for salad; and then about the old practice and the new, and what her sister said, and what her sister's friend said, and what the physician to her sister's friend said, and then what was said by the brother of the sister of the physician of the friend of her sister, exactly as if it had been in Ollendorff? There was a moment's pause, as she declined champagne. "I am very glad you like it," said Dennis again, which he never should have said but to one who complimented a sermon. "Oh! you are so sharp, Mr. Ingham! No! I never drink any wine at all—except sometimes in summer a little currant shrub—from our own currants, you know. My own mother—that is, I call her my own mother, because you know, I do not remember," etc., etc., etc., till they came to the candied orange at the end of the feast, when Dennis, rather confused, thought he must say something, and tried No. 4—"I agree, in general, with my friend the other side

of the room"—which he never should have said but at a public meeting. But Mrs. Jeffries, who never listens excepting to understand, caught him up instantly with, "Well, I'm sure my husband returns the compliment; he always agrees with you—though we do worship with the Methodists; but you know, Mr. Ingham," etc., etc., etc., till they move upstairs; and as Dennis led her through the hall, he was scarcely understood by any but Polly, as he said, "There has been so much said, and, on the whole, so well said, that I will not occupy the time."

His great resource the rest of the evening was standing in the library, carrying on animated conversations with one and another in much the same way. Polly had initiated him in the mysteries of a discovery of mine, that it is not necessary to finish your sentences in a crowd, but by a sort of mumble, omitting sibilants and details. This, indeed, if your words fail you answers even in public extempore speech, but better where other talking is going on. Thus: "We missed you at the Natural History Society, Ingham." Ingham replies, "I am very gligloglum, that is, that you were mmmmm." By gradually dropping the voice, the interlocutor is compelled to supply the answer. "Mrs. Ingham, I hope your friend Augusta is better." Augusta has not been ill. Polly cannot think of explaining, however, and answers, "Thank you, ma'am; she is very reareson wewahwewoh," in lower and lower tones. And Mrs. Throck-

morton, who forgot the subject of which she spoke as soon as she asked the question, is quite satisfied. Dennis could see into the card-room, and came to Polly to ask if he might not go and play all-fours. But, of course, she refused. At midnight they came home delighted—Polly, wild to tell me the story of the victory; only both the pretty Walton girls said, "Cousin Frederic, you did not come near me all the evening." . . .

But I see I loiter on my story, which is rushing to the plunge. Let me stop an instant more, however, to recall, were it only to myself that charming year while all was yet well. After the double had become a matter of course, for nearly twelve months before he undid me, what a year it was! Full of active life, full of happy love, of the hardest work, of the sweetest sleep, and the fulfilment of so many of the fresh aspirations and dreams of boyhood! Dennis went to every school-committee meeting, and sat through all those late wranglings which used to keep me up till midnight and awake till morning. He attended all the lectures to which foreign exiles sent me tickets begging me to come for the love of Heaven and of Bohemia. He accepted and used all the tickets for charity concerts which were sent to me. He appeared everywhere where it was specially desirable that "our denomination," or "our party," or "our class," or "our family," or "our street," or "our town," or "our country," or "our State," should be fully represented. . . .

Freed from these necessities, that happy year I began to know my wife by sight. We saw each other sometimes. In those long mornings, when Dennis was in the study explaining to map-pedlers that I had eleven maps of Jerusalem already, and to school-book agents that I would see them hanged before I would be bribed to introduce their text-books into the schools, she and I were at work together, as in those old dreamy days—and in these of our log cabin again. But all this could not last, and at length poor Dennis, my double, overtasked in turn, undid me.

It was thus it happened. There is an excellent fellow—once a minister—I will call him Isaacs—who deserves well of the world till he dies, and after, because he once, in a real exigency. did the right thing, in the right way, at the right time, as no other man could do it. In the world's great football match, the ball by chance found him loitering on the outside of the field; he closed with it, "camped" it, charged it home—yes, right through the other side—not disturbed, not frightened by his own success —and breathless found himself a great man as the Great Delta rang applause. But he did not find himself a rich man; and the football has never come in his way again. From that moment to this moment he has been of no use, that one can see, at all. Still, for that great act we speak of Isaacs gratefully and remember him kindly; and he forges on, hoping

to meet the football somewhere again. In that vague hope he had arranged a "movement" for a general organization of the human family into Debating Clubs, County Societies, State Unions, etc., etc., with a view of inducing all children to take hold of the handles of their knives and forks, instead of the metal. Children have bad habits in that way. The movement, of course, was absurd; but we all did our best to forward, not it, but him. It came time for the annual county meeting on this subject to be held at Naguadavick. Isaacs came round, good fellow! to arrange for it—got the town-hall, got the Governor to preside (the saint! He ought to have triplet doubles provided him by law), and then came to get me to speak. "No," I said, "I would not speak if ten Governors presided. I do not believe in the enterprise. If I spoke, it should be to say children should take hold of the prongs of the forks and *the* blades of the knives. I would subscribe ten dollars, but I would not speak a mill." So poor Isaacs went his way sadly, to coax Auchmuty to speak, and Delafield. I went out. Not long after, he came back and told Polly that they promised to speak, the Governor would speak, and he himself would close with the quarterly report and some interesting anecdotes regarding Miss Biffin's way of handling her knife and Mr. Nellis's way of footing his fork. "Now, if Mr. Ingham will only come and sit on the platform, he need not say

one word; but it will show well in the paper—it will show that the Sandemanians take as much interest in the movement as the Armenians or the Mesopotamians, and will be a great favor to me." Polly, good soul: was tempted, and she promised. She knew Mrs. Isaacs was starving, and the babies—she knew Dennis was at home—and she promised! Night came, and I returned. I heard her story. I was sorry. I doubted. But Polly had promised to beg me, and I dared all! I told Dennis to hold his peace, under all circumstances, and sent him down.

It was not half an hour more before he returned wild with excitement—in a perfect Irish fury—which it was long before I understood. But I knew at once that he had undone me!

What happened was this. The audience got together, attracted by Governor Gorges's name. There were a thousand people. Poor Gorges was late from Augusta. They became impatient. He came in direct from the train at last, really ignorant of the object of the meeting. He opened it in the fewest possible words, and said other gentlemen were present who would entertain them better than he.

The audience was disappointed, but waited. The Governor, prompted by Isaacs, said, "The Honorable Mr. Delafield will address you." Delafield had forgotten the knives and forks, and was playing the Ruy Lopez opening at the chess club.

"The Reverend Mr. Auchmuty will address you." Auchmuty had promised to speak late, and was at the school committee.

"I see Doctor Stearns in the hall; perhaps he will say a word." Doctor Stearns said he had come to listen and not to speak.

The Governor and Isaacs whispered. The Governor looked at Dennis, who was resplendent on the platform; but Isaacs, to give him his due, shook his head. But the look was enough.

A miserable lad, ill-bred, who had once been in Boston, thought it would sound well to call for me, and peeped out "Ingham!" A few more wretches cried "Ingham! Ingham!" Still Isaacs was firm; but the Governor, anxious, indeed, to prevent a row, knew I would say something, and said: "Our friend, Mr. Ingham, is always prepared; and, though we had not relied upon him, he will say a word perhaps."

Applause followed, which turned Dennis's head. He rose, fluttered, and tried No. 3: "There has been so much said, and, on the whole, so well said, that I will not longer occupy the time!" and sat down, looking for his hat; for things seemed squally.

But the people cried "Go on! Go on!" and some applauded. Dennis, still confused, but flattered by the applause, to which neither he nor I are used, rose again, and this time tried No. 2: "I am very glad you

liked it!" in a sonorous, clear delivery. My best friends stared. All the people who did not know me personally yelled with delight at the aspect of the evening; the Governor was beside himself, and poor Isaacs thought he was undone! Alas, it was I! A boy in the gallery cried in a loud tone, "It's all an infernal humbug," just as Dennis, waving his hand, commanded silence, and tried No. 4: "I agree, in general, with my friend the other side of the room." The Governor doubted his senses and crossed to stop him—not in time, however The same gallery boy shouted, "How's your mother?" and Dennis, now completely lost, tried, as his last shot, No. 1, vainly: "Very well, thank you; and you?"

I think I must have been undone already. But Dennis, like another Lockhard, chose "to make sicker."

The audience rose in a whirl of amazement, rage and sorrow. Some other impertinence, aimed at Dennis, broke all restraint, and, in pure Irish, he delivered himself of an address to the gallery, inviting any person who wished to fight to come down and do so, stating that they were all dogs and cowards and the sons of dogs and cowards, that he would take any five of them single-handed. "Shure, I have said all his Riverence and the Misthress bade me say," cried he in defiance; and, seizing the Governor's cane from his hand, brandished it, quarter-staff fashion,

above his head. He was, indeed, got from the hall only with the greatest difficulty by the Governor, the City Marshal, who had been called in, and the Superintendent of my Sunday-school.

The universal impression, of course, was that the Reverend Frederic Ingham had lost all command of himself in some of those haunts of intoxication which for fifteen years I had been laboring to destroy. Till this moment, indeed, that is the impression in Naguadavick. This number of the *Atlantic* will relieve from it a hundred friends of mine who have been sadly wounded by that notion now for years; but I shall not be likely ever to show my head there again.

No. My double has undone me.

We left town at seven the next morning. I came to No. 9, in the Third Range, and settled on the Minister's Lot. In the new towns in Maine, the first settled minister has a gift of a hundred acres of land. I am the first settled minister in No. 9. My wife and little Paulina are my parish. We raise corn enough to live on in summer. We kill bear's meat enough to carbonize it in winter. I work on steadily on my "Traces of Sandemanianism in the Sixth and Seventh Centuries," which I hope to persuade Phillips, Sampson & Company to publish next year. We are very happy, but the world thinks we are undone.—*If, yes, and perhaps.*

"OFF AT BUFFALO"

"Now see here, porter," said he briskly, "I want you to put me off at Syracuse. You know we get in there about six o'clock in the morning, and I may oversleep myself. But it is important that I should get out. Here's a five-dollar gold piece. Now I may wake up hard, for I have been dining to-night and will probably feel rocky. Don't mind if I kick. Pay no attention if I'm ugly. I want you to put me off at Syracuse."

"Yes, sah," answered the sturdy Nubian, ramming the bright coin into his trousers pocket. "It shall be did, sah!"

The next morning the coin-giver was awakened by a stentorian voice calling: "Rochester! Thirty minutes for refreshments!"

"Rochester!" he exclaimed, sitting up. "Where is that —— coon?"

Hastily slipping on his trousers, he went in search of the object of his wrath, and found him in the porter's closet, huddled up with his head in a bandage, his clothes torn, and his arm in a sling.

"Well," says the drummer, "you are a sight. Been in an accident? Why didn't you put me off at Syracuse?"

"Wha-at!" ejaculated the porter, jumping to his feet, as his eyes bulged from his head. "Was

you de gemman what guf ter me a five-dollah gold piece?"

"Of course I was, you idiot!"

"Well, den, befoah de Lawd, who was dat gemman I put off at Syracuse?"

The following story was recently told by a Galveston high school teacher:

At one time there were visiting in that city the famous Tom Ochiltree and Mr. Mackay, the California millionaire, and the teacher in question gave out one day "Our Visitors" as the subject for a composition. Among those which were submitted was one by a bright girl which commenced as follows:

"We have in our midst two distinguished visitors, Mr. Mackay and Tom Ochiltree, representing, respectively, gold from California and brass from Texas."

One of Travers's best *bon mots* was inspired by the sight of the Siamese twins. After carefully examining the mysterious ligature that had bound them together from birth, he looked up blankly at them and said: "B-b-br-brothers, I presume?"

Mr. Clews says that the last time he saw Travers, the genial broker called at his office. Looking at the tape, Clews remarked: "The market is pretty stiff to-day, Travers."

"Y-y-yes, but it is the st-st-stiffness of d-d-death."

BRET HARTE

TO THE PLIOCENE SKULL

A Geological Address

"Speak, O man, less recent! Fragmentary fossil!
Primal pioneer of pliocene formation,
Hid in lowest drifts below the earliest stratum
Of volcanic tufa!

"Older than the beasts, the oldest Palæotherium;
Older than the trees, the oldest Cryptogami;
Older than the hills, those infantile eruptions
Of earth's epidermis!

"Eo—Mio—Plio—whatsoe'er the 'cene' was
That those vacant sockets filled with awe and wonder—
Whether shores Devonian or Silurian beaches—
Tell us thy strange story!

"Or has the professor slightly antedated
By some thousand years thy advent on this planet,
Giving thee an air that's somewhat better fitted
For cold-blooded creatures?

"Wert thou true spectator of that mighty forest
When above thy head the stately Sigillaria

Reared its columned trunks in that remote and distant
Carboniferous epoch?

'Tell us of that scene—the dim and watery woodland
Songless, silent, hushed, with never bird or insect,
Veiled with spreading fronds and screened with tall club-mosses,
Lycopodiacea—

"When beside thee walked the solemn Plesiosaurus,
And around thee crept the festive Ichthyosaurus,
While from time to time above thee flew and circled
Cheerful Pterodactyls.

"Tell us of thy food—those half-marine refections,
Crinoids on the shell and Brachiopods *au naturel*—
Cuttlefish to which the *pieuvre* of Victor Hugo
Seems a periwinkle.

"Speak, thou awful vestige of the Earth's creation—
Solitary fragment of remains organic!
Tell the wondrous secret of thy past existence—
Speak! thou oldest primate!"

To the Pliocene Skull

Even as I gazed, a thrill of the maxilla,
And a lateral movement of the condyloid process,
With post-pliocene sounds of healthy mastication,
Ground the teeth together.

And, from that imperfect dental exhibition,
Stained with expressed juices of the weed Nicotian,
Came these hollow accents, blent with softer murmurs
Of expectoration:

"Which my name is Bowers, and my crust was busted
Falling down a shaft in Calaveras County.
But I'd take it kindly if you'd send the pieces
Home to old Missouri!"

The Professor (at the dinner table): "Oh, by the way, Mrs. Chopsticks, have you seen your little boy, Willie, lately?"

Mrs. Chopsticks: "No, Professor, I have not seen him since 10 o'clock, and I can't imagine what has become of him. In fact, I am very much worried about him."

Professor: "Well, seeing Martha pour me out that glass of water just now reminded me of something that I had on my mind to tell you some time ago, but which unfortunately escaped my mind. It was just about 10 o'clock, I think, that I saw Willie fall down the well."

HIS IDEA

After Mr. Scadds left the station he experienced a severe shock upon discovering that a packet of bank-notes which he was taking to the city was nowhere about his person.

He must have left it in the Pullman car.

"I'll go to the superintendent's office and make my loss known," he thought; and he did.

"I left a packet containing $5,000 in bank-notes in a Pullman car not half an hour ago," said Mr. Scadds to the official.

"Which train?"

"The one which arrived at 9:15."

"Have you your Pullman check?"

Fortunately he had, and this enabled the superintendent to send for the conductor. He soon arrived, for he had not yet finished the report of his trip, and was still in the building.

"Conductor," said the superintendent, "did you see anything of a package left in your car?"

"No, sir."

"Porter didn't turn anything over to you?"

"No, sir."

"Bring the porter here."

He was brought.

"Did you see anything of a small packet after the passengers left your car?"

"Yes, sah."

"You haven't turned it in?'

"Why, no, sah. It was a lot of money, sah."

"Precisely. Where is it now?"

"Here, sah."

It was produced from an inside pocket.

Mr. Scadds's eyes brightened when he saw the roll.

"That's it," he exclaimed. He counted the money and it was all there, the entire $5,000.

"Look here, Porter," said the superintendent, severely. "I want to know why you did not bring that packet to me the moment you got your fingers on it?"

"Why, sah," replied the man with an injured air. "I s'posed de gemman had left it for a tip, sah. That's why, sah."

"EXPLANATORY.—Last week we announced that we were going on the trail of J. B. Davis, the Apache Avenue grocer, and that this week's issue would contain an *exposé* calculated to startle the community. We had more than a column of it in type when Mr. Davis called at the *Kicker* office and subscribed for the paper and gave us a column 'ad.' for a year.

"Mr. Davis is not only a genial, whole-souled gentleman, worthy of a place in our best society, but an enterprising, go-ahead citizen who is a credit to the whole State. When you want the best of goods at the lowest prices call on him."—*Arizona Kicker in Detroit Free Press.*

PLUMBERS

SPEAKING of the philosophical temper, there is no class of men whose society is more to be desired for this quality than that of plumbers. They are the most agreeable men I know; and the boys in the business begin to be agreeable very early. I suspect the secret of it is, that they are agreeable by the hour. In the dryest days my fountain became disabled; the pipe was stopped up. A couple of plumbers, with the implements of their craft, came out to view the situation. There was a good deal of difference of opinion about where the stoppage was. I found the plumbers perfectly willing to sit down and talk about it—talk by the hour. Some of their guesses and remarks were exceedingly ingenious; and their general observations on other subjects were excellent in their way, and could hardly have been better if they had been made by the job. The work dragged a little—as it is apt to do by the hour. The plumbers had occasion to make me several visits. Sometimes they would find, upon arrival, that they had forgotten some indispensable tool, and one would go back to the shop, a mile and a half, after it, and his companion would await his return with the most exemplary patience, and sit down and talk—always by the hour. I do not know but it is a habit to have something wanted at the shop. They

seemed to me very good workmen, and always willing to stop and talk about the job, or anything else, when I went near them. Nor had they any of that impetuous hurry that is said to be the bane of our American civilization. To their credit be it said, that I never observed anything of it in them. They can afford to wait. Two of them will sometimes wait nearly half a day while a comrade goes for a tool. They are patient and philosophical. It is a great pleasure to meet such men. One only wishes there was some work he could do for *them* by the hour. There ought to be reciprocity. I think they have very nearly solved the problem of Life: it is to work for other people, never for yourself, and get your pay by the hour. You then have no anxiety, and little work. If you do things by the job you are perpetually driven: the hours are scourges. If you work by the hour, you gently sail on the stream of Time, which is always bearing you on to the haven of Pay, whether you make any effort or not. Working by the hour tends to make one moral. A plumber working by the job, trying to unscrew a rusty, refractory nut in a cramped position, where the tongs continually slipped off would swear; but I never heard one of them swear, or exhibit the least impatience at such a vexation, working by the hour. Nothing can move a man who is paid by the hour. How sweet the flight of time seems to his calm mind!

CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER.

ELLIS PARKER BUTLER

JUST LIKE A CAT*

They were doing good work out back of the Westcote express office. The Westcote Land and Improvement Company was ripping the whole top off Seiler's Hill and dumping it into the swampy meadow, and Mike Flannery liked to sit at the back door of the express office, when there was nothing to do, and watch the endless string of wagons dump the soft clay and sand there. Already the swamp was a vast landscape of small hills and valleys of new, soft soil, and soon it would burst into streets and dwellings. That would mean more work, but Flannery did not care; the company had allowed him a helper already, and Flannery had hopes that by the time the swamp was populated Timmy would be of some use. He doubted it, but he had hopes.

The four-thirty-two train had just pulled in, and Timmy had gone across the street to meet it with his hand-truck, and now he returned. He came lazily, pulling the cart behind him with one hand. He didn't seem to care whether he ever got back to the office. Flannery's quick blood rebelled.

*From "Mike Flannery On Duty and Off," copyright, 1909, by Doubleday, Page and Company.

"Is that all th' faster ye can go?" he shouted. "Make haste! Make haste! 'Tis an ixpriss company ye are workin' fer, an' not a cimitery. T' look at ye wan w'u'd think ye was nawthin' but a funeral!"

"Sure I am," said Timmy. "'Tis as ye have said it, Flannery; I'm th' funeral."

Flannery stuck out his under jaw, and his eyes blazed. For nothing at all he would have let Timmy have a fist in the side of the head, but what was the use? There are some folks you can't pound sense into, and Timmy was one of them.

"What have ye got, then?" asked Flannery.

"Nawthin' but th'corpse," said Timmy impudently, and Flannery did do it. He swung his big right hand at the lad, and would have taught him something, but Timmy wasn't there. He had dodged. Flannery ground his teeth, and bent over the hand-truck. The next moment he straightened up and motioned to Timmy, who had stepped back from him, nearly half a block back.

"Come back," he said peacefully. "Come on back. This wan time I'll do nawthin' to ye. Come on back an' lift th' box into th' office. But th' next time—"

Timmy came back, grinning. He took the box off the truck, carried it into the office, and set it on the floor. It was not a large box, nor heavy, just a small box with strips nailed across the top, and there was an Angora cat in it. It was a fine, large Angora cat, but it was dead.

Flannery looked at the tag that was nailed on the side of the box. "Ye'd betther git th' wagon,

Timmy," he said slowly, "an' proceed with th' funeral up t' Missus Warman's. This be no weather for perishable goods t' be lyin' 'round th' office. Quick speed is th' motto av th' Interurban Ixpriss Company whin th' weather is eighty-four in th' shade. An', Timmy," he called as the boy moved toward the door, "make no difficulty sh'u'd she insist on receiptin' fer th' goods as bein' damaged. If nicissary take th' receipt fer 'Wan long-haired cat, damaged.' But make haste. 'Tis in me mind that sh'u'd ye wait too long Missus Warman will not be receivin' th' consignment at all. She's wan av th' particular kind, Timmy."

In half an hour Timmy was back. He came into the office lugging the box, and let it drop on the floor with a thud.

"She won't take no damaged cats," said Timmy shortly.

Mike Flannery laid his pen on his desk with almost painful slowness and precision. Slowly he slid off his chair, and slowly he picked up his cap and put it on his head. He did not say a word. His brow was drawn into deep wrinkles, and his eyes glittered as he walked up to the box with almost supernaturally stately tread and picked it up. His lips were firmly set as he walked out of the office into the hot sun. Timmy watched him silently.

In less than half an hour Mike Flannery came into the office again, quietly, and set the box silently on the floor. Noiselessly he hung up his cap on the nail above the big calendar back of the

counter. He sank into his chair and looked for a long while at the blank wall opposite him.

"An' t' think," he said at last, like one still wrapped in a great blanket of surprise, "t' think she didn't swear wan cuss th' whole time! Thim ladies is wonderful folks! I wonder did she say th' same t' ye as she said t' me, Timmy?"

"Sure she did," said Timmy, grinning as usual

"Will ye think of that, now!" said Flannery with admiration. "'Tis a grand constitution she must be havin', that lady. Twice in wan afternoon! I wonder could she say th' same three times? 'Tis not possible."

He ran his hand across his forehead and sighed, and his eyes fell on the box. It was still where he had put it, but he seemed surprised to see it there. He had no recollection of anything after Mrs. Warman had begun to talk. He picked up his pen again.

"Interurban Express Co., New York," he wrote. "Consiny Mrs. Warman won't reciev cat way bill 23645 Hibbert and Jones consinor cat is—"

He grinned and ran the end of the pen through his stubble of red hair.

"What is th' swell worrd fer dead, Timmy?" he asked. "I'm writin' a letter t' th' swell clerks in New Yorrk that be always guyin' me about me letters, an' I'll hand thim a swell worrd fer wance."

"Deceased," said Timmy, grinning.

"'Tis not that wan I was thinkin' of," said Flannery, "but that wan will do. 'Tis a high-soundin' worrd, deceased."

He dipped his pen in the ink again.

"—cat is diseased," he wrote. "Pleas give disposal. Mike Flannery."

When the New York office of the Interurban Express Company received Flannery's letter they called up Hibbert & Jones on the telephone. Hibbert & Jones was the big department store, and it was among the Interurban's best customers. When the Interurban could do it a favor it was policy to do so, and the clerk knew that sending a cat back and forth by rail was not the best thing for the cat, especially if the cat was diseased.

"That cat," said the manager of the live-animal department of Hibbert & Jones, "was in good health when it left here, absolutely, so far as we know. If it was not it is none of our business. Mrs. Warman came in and picked the cat out from a dozen or more, and paid for it. It is her cat. It doesn't interest us any more. And another thing: You gave us a receipt for that cat in good order; if it was damaged in transit it is none of our affair, it it?"

"Owner's risk," said the Interurban clerk. "You know we only accept live animals for transportation at owner's risk."

"That lets us out, then," said the Hibbert & Jones clerk. "Mrs. Warman is the owner. Ring off, please."

Westcote is merely a suburb of New York, and mails are frequent, and Mike Flannery found a letter waiting for him when he opened the office the next morning. It was brief. It said:

Photo. Brown Bros.

ELLIS PARKER BUTLER

"Regarding cat, W. B. 23645, this was sent at owner's risk, and Mrs. Warman seems to be the owner. Cat should be delivered to her. We are writing her from this office, but in case she does not call for it immediately, you will keep it carefully in your office. You had better have a veterinary look at the cat. Feed it regularly."

Mike Flannery folded the letter slowly and looked down at the cat. "Feed it!" he exclaimed. "I wonder, now, was that a misprint fer fumigate it, fer that is what it will be wantin' mighty soon, if I know anything about deceased cats. I wonder do thim dudes in New Yorrk be thinkin', th' long-haired cat is only fainted, mebby? Do they think they see Mike Flannery sittin' be th' bedside av th' cat, fannin' it t' bring it t' consciousness? Feed it! Niver in me life have I made a specialty av cats, long-haired or short-haired, an' I do not be pretindin' t' be a profissor av cats, but 'tis me sittled belief that whin a cat is as dead as that wan is it stops eatin'."

He looked resentfully at the cat in the box.

"I wonder sh'u'd I put th' late laminted out on th' back porrch till the veterinary comes t' take its pulse? I wonder what th' ixpriss company wants a veterinary t' butt into th' thing fer annyhow? Is it th' custom nowadays t' require a certificate av health fer every cat that's as dead as that wan is before th' funeral comes off? Sure, I do believe th' ixpriss company has doubts av Mike Flannery's ability t' tell is a cat dead or no. Mebby 'tis thrue. Mebby so. But wan thing I'm dang sure

av, an that is that sh'u'd the weather not turrn off t' a cold wave by to-morry mornin' 'twill take no coroner t' know th' cat is dead."

He opened the letter again and reread it. As he did so the scowl on his face increased. He held up the letter and slapped it with the back of his hand.

"'Kape it carefully in your office,'" he read with scorn. "Sure! An' what about Flannery? Does th' man think I'm t' sit side by side with th' dead pussy cat an' thry t' work up me imagination t' thinkin' I'm sittin' in a garden av tuberoses? 'Tis well enough t' say kape it, but cats like thim does not kape very well. Th' less said about th' way they kapes th' betther."

Timmy entered the office, and as he passed the box he sniffed the air in a manner that at once roused Flannery's temper.

"Sthop that?" he shouted. "I'll have none av ver foolin' t'-day. What fer are ye puckerin' up yer nose at th' cat fer? There's nawthin' th' matther with th' cat. 'Tis as sound as a shillin', an' there's no call fer ye t' be sniffin' 'round, Timmy, me lad! Go about yer worrk, an' lave th' cat alone. 'Twill kape—'twill kape a long time yet. Don't be so previous, me lad. If ye want t' sniff, there'll be plinty av time by an' by. Plinty av it."

"Ye ain't goin' t' keep th' cat, are ye?" asked Timmy with surprise.

"Let be," said Flannery softly, with a gentle downward motion of his hands. "Let be. If 'tis me opinion 't w'u'd be best t' kape th' cat fer

some time, I will kape it. Mike Flannery is th' ixpriss agint av this office, Tim, me bye, an' sh'u'd he be thinkin' 't w'u'd be best fer th' intherists av th' company t' kape a cat that is no longer livin', he will. There be manny things fer ye t' learn, Timmy, before ye know th' whole av th' ixpriss business, an' dead cats is wan av thim."

"G'wan!" said Timmy with a long-drawn vowel. "I know a dead cat when I see one, now."

"Mebby," said Flannery shortly. "Mebby. An' mebby not. But do ye know where Doc Pomeroy hangs out? Go an' fetch him."

As Timmy passed the box on the way out he looked at the cat with renewed interest. He began to have a slight doubt that he might not know a dead cat when he saw one, after all, if Flannery was going to have a veterinary come to look at it. But the cat certainly *looked* dead—extremely dead.

Doc Pomeroy was a tall, lank man with a slouch in his shoulders and a sad, hollowchested voice. His voice was the deepest and mournfullest bass. "The boy says you want me to look at a cat," he said in his hopeless tone. "Where's the cat?"

Flannery walked to the box and stood over it, and Doc Pomeroy stood at the other side. He did not even bend down to look at the cat.

"That cat's dead," he said without emotion.

"Av course it is," said Flannery. "'Twas dead th' firrst time I seen it."

"The boy said you wanted me to look at a cat," said Doc Pomeroy.

"Sure!" said Flannery. "Sure I did! That's

th' cat. I wanted ye t' see th' cat. What might be yer opinion av it?"

"What do you want me to do with the cat?" asked Doc Pomeroy.

"Look at it," said Flannery pleasantly. "Nawthin' but look at it. Thim is me orders. 'Have a veterinary look at th' cat,' is what they says. An' I can see be th' look on ye that 'tis yer opinion 'tis a mighty dead cat."

"That cat," said the veterinary slowly, "is as dead as it can be. A cat can't be any deader than that one is."

"It cannot," said Flannery positively. "But it can be longer dead."

"If I had a cat that had been dead longer than that cat has been dead," said Doc Pomeroy as he moved away, "I wouldn't have to see it to know that it was dead. A cat that has been dead longer than that cat has been dead lets you know it. That cat will let you know it pretty quick, now."

"Thank ye," said Flannery. "An' ye have had a good look at it? Ye w'u'dn't like t'look at it again, mebby? Thim is me orders, t'allow ixamination be th' veterinary, an' if 't w'u'd be anny comfort t' ye I will draw up a chair so ye can look all ye want to."

The veterinary raised his sad eyes to Flannery's face and let them rest there a moment. "Much obliged," he said, but he did not look at the cat again. He went back to his headquarters.

That afternoon Flannery and Timmy began walking quickly when they passed the box, and

toward evening, when Flannery had to make out his reports, he went out on the back porch and wrote them, using a chair-seat for a desk. One of his tasks was to write a letter to the New York office.

"W. B. 23645," he wrote, "the vetinnary has seen the cat, and its diseased all right. he says so. no sine of Mrs. Warman yet but ile keep the cat in the offis if you say so as long as I cann stand it. but how cann i feed a diseased cat. i nevver fed a diseased cat yet. what do you feed cats lik that."

The next morning when Flannery reached the office he opened the front door, and immediately closed it with a bang and locked it. Timmy was late, as usual. Flannery stood a minute looking at the door, and then he sat down on the edge of the curb to wait for Timmy. The boy came along after a while, indolently as usual, but when he saw Flannery he quickened his pace a little.

"What's th' matter?" he asked. "Locked out?"

Flannery stood up. He did not even say good morning. He ran his hand into his pocket and pulled out the key. "Timmy," he said gently, almost lovingly, "I have business that takes me t' th' other side av town. I have th' confidence in ye, Timmy, t' let ye open up th' office. 'Tw ll be good ixperience fer ye." He cast his eye down the street, where the car line made a turn around the corner. The trolley wire was shaking. "Th' way ye open up," he said slowly, "is t' push th' key into th' keyhole. Push th' key in, Timmy, an thin turn it t' th' lift. Wait!" he called as Timmy turned. " 'Tis important t' turrn t' th' lift, not

th' right. An' whin ye have th' door open"—the car was rounding the corner, and Flannery stepped into the street—"whin ye have th' door open—th' door open"—the car was where he could touch it—"take th' cat out behint th' office an' bury it, an' if ye don't I'll fire ye out av yer job. Mind that!"

The car sped by, and Flannery swung aboard. Timmy watched it until it went out of sight around the next corner, and then he turned to the office door. He pushed the key in, and turned it to the left.

When Flannery returned the cat was gone, and so was Timmy. The grocer next door handed Flannery the key, and Flannery's face grew red with rage. He opened the door of the office, and for a moment he was sure the cat was not gone, but it was. Flannery could not see the box; it was gone. He threw open the back door and let the wind sweep through the office, and it blew a paper off the desk. Flannery picked it up and read it. It was from Timmy.

"Mike Flannery, esquire," it said. "Take youre old job. Im tired of the express bisiness. Too much cats and missus Warmans in it. im going to New York to look for a decent job. I berried the cat for you but no more for me. youres truly."

Flannery smiled. The loss of Timmy did not bother him so long as the cat had gone also. He turned to the tasks of the day with a light heart.

The afternoon mail brought him a letter from the New York office. "Regarding W. B. 23645," it said, "and in answer to yours of yesterday's date.

In our previous communication we clearly requested you to have a veterinary look at the cat. We judge from your letter that you neglected to do this, as the veterinary would certainly have told you what to feed the cat. See the veterinary at once and ask him what to feed the cat. Then feed the cat what he tells you to feed it. We presume it is not necessary for us to tell you to water the cat."

Flannery grinned. "An' ain't thim th' jokers now!" he exclaimed. "'Tis some smart bye must have his fun with ould Flannery! go an' see th' veterinary! An' ask him what t' feed th' cat! 'Good mornin', Mister Pomeroy. Do ye remimber th' dead cat ye looked at yisterday? 'Tis in a bad way th' mornin', sor. 'Tis far an' away deader than it was yisterday. We had th' funeral this mornin'. What w'u'd ye be advisin' me t' feed it fer a regular diet now?' Oh yis! I'll go t' th' veterinary—not!"

He stared at the letter frowningly.

"An' 'tis not nicessary t' tell me t' water th' cat!" he said. "Oh no, they'll be trustin' Flannery t' water th' cat. Flannery has loads av time. 'Tis no need fer him t' spind his time doin' th' ixpriss business. 'Git th' sprinklin'-can, Flannery, an' water th' cat. Belike if ye water it well, ye'll be havin' a fine flower-bed av long-haired cats out behint th' office. Water th' cat well, an' plant it awn th' sunny side av th' house, an' whin it sprouts transplant it t' th' shady side where it can run up th' trellis. 'Twill bloom' hearty until cold weather,

if watered plinty!' Bechune thim an' me 'tis me opinion th' cat was kept too long t' grow well anny more."

Mrs. Warman was very much surprised that afternoon to receive a letter from the express company. As soon as she saw the name of the company in the corner of the envelope her face hardened. She had an intuition that this was to be another case where the suffering public was imposed upon by an overbearing corporation, and she did not mean to be the victim. She had refused the cat. Fond as she was of cats, she had never liked them dead. She was through with that cat. She tore open the envelope. A woman never leaves an envelope unopened. The next moment she was more surprised than before.

"Dear Madam," said the letter. "Regarding a certain cat sent to your address through our company by Hibbert & Jones of this city, while advising you of our entire freedom from responsibility in the matter, all animals being accepted by us at owner's risk only, we beg to make the following communication: The cat is now in storage at our express office in Westcote, and is sick. A letter from our agent there leads us to believe that the cat may not receive the best of attention at his hands. In order that it may be properly fed and cared for we would suggest that you accept the cat from our hands, under protest if you wish, until you can arrange with Messrs. Hibbert & Jones as to the ownership. In asking you to take the cat in this way we have no other object in view

than to stop the charges for storage and care, which are accumulating, and to make sure that the cat is receiving good attention. We might say, however, that Hibbert & Jones assure us that the cat is your property, and therefore, until we have assurance to the contrary, we must look to you for all charges for transpostation, storage, and care accruing while the cat is left with us. Yours very truly."

When she had read the letter Mrs. Warman's emotions were extremely mixed. She felt an undying anger toward the express company; she felt an entirely different and more personal anger toward the firm of Hibbert & Jones, but above all she felt a great surprise regarding the cat. If ever she had seen a cat that she thought was a thoroughly dead cat this was the cat. She had had many cats in her day, and she had always thought she knew a dead cat when she saw one, and now this dead cat was alive—ailing, perhaps, but alive. The more she considered it, the less likely it seemed to her that she could have been mistaken about the deadness of that cat. It had been offered to her twice. The first time she saw it she knew it was dead, and the second time she saw it she knew it was, if anything, more dead than it had been the first time. The conclusion was obvious. A cat had been sent to her in a box. She had refused to receive a dead cat, and the expressmen had taken the box away again. Now there was a live, but sick, cat in the box. She had her opinion of expressmen, express companies, and especially of

the firm of Hibbert & Jones. This full opinion she sent to Hibbert & Jones by the next mail.

The next morning Flannery was feeling fine. He whistled as he went to the nine-twenty train, and whistled as he came back to the office with his hand-truck full of packages and the large express envelope with the red seals on the back snugly tucked in his inside pocket, but when he opened the envelope and read the first paper that fell out he stopped whistling.

"Agent, Westcote," said the letter. "Regarding W. B. 23645, Hibbert & Jones, consignor of the cat you are holding in storage, advises us that the consignee claims cat you have is not the cat shipped by consignor. Return cat by first train to this office. If the cat is not strong enough to travel alone have veterinary accompany it. Yrs. truly, Interurban Express Company, per J."

At first a grin spread over the face of Flannery. "'Not sthrong enough t' travel alone'!" he said with a chuckle. "If iver there was a sthrong cat 'tis that wan be this time, an' 't w'u'd be a waste av ixpinse t' hire a—" Suddenly his face sobered. He glanced out of the back door at the square mile of hummocky sand and clay.

"'Return cat be firrst trrain t' this office,'" he repeated blankly. He left his seat and went to the door and looked out. "Return th' cat," he said, and stepped out upon the edge of the soft, new soil. It was all alike in its recently dug appearance. "Th' cat, return it," he repeated, taking steps this way and that way, with his eyes

on the clay at his feet. He walked here and there, but one place looked like the others. There was room for ten thousand cats, and one cat might have been buried in any one of ten thousand places. Flannery sighed. Orders were orders, and he went back to the office and locked the doors. He borrowed a coal-scoop from the grocer next door and went out and began to dig up the clay and sand. He dug steadily and grimly. Never, perhaps, in the history of the world had a man worked so hard to dig up a dead cat. Even in ancient Egypt, where the cat was a sacred animal, they did not dig them up when they had them planted. Quite the contrary: it was a crime to dig them up; and Flannery, as he dug, had a feeling that it would be almost a crime to dig up this one. Never, perhaps, did a man dig so hard to find a thing he really did not care to have.

Flannery dug all that morning. At lunch-time he stopped digging—and went without his lunch—long enough to deliver the packages that had come on the early train. As he passed the station he saw a crowd of boys playing hockey with an old tomato-can, and he stopped. When he reached the office he was followed by sixteen boys. Some of them had spades, some of them had small fire-shovels, some had only pointed sticks, but all were ready to dig. He showed them where he had already dug.

"Twinty-five cints apiece, annyhow," he said, "an' five dollars fer th' lucky wan that finds it."

"All right," said one. "Now what is it we are to dig for?"

"'Tis a cat," said Flannery, "a dead wan."

"Go on!" cried the boy sarcastically. "What *is* it we are to dig for?"

"I can get you a dead cat, mister," said another. "Our cat died."

"'Twill not do," said Flannery. "'Tis a special cat I'm wantin'. 'Tis a longhaired cat, an' 'twas dead a long time. Ye can't mistake it whin ye come awn to it. If ye dig up a cat ye know no wan w'u'd want t' have, that's it."

The sixteen boys dug, and Flannery, in desperation, dug, but a square mile is a large plot of ground to dig over. No one, having observed that cat on the morning when Timmy planted it, would have believed it could be put in any place where it could not be instantly found again. It had seemed like a cat that would advertise itself. But that is just like a cat; it is always around when it isn't needed, and when it is needed it can't be found. Before the afternoon was half over the boys had tired of digging for a dead cat and had gone away, but Flannery kept at it until the sun went down. Then he looked to see how much of the plot was left to dig up. It was nearly all left. As he washed his hands before going to his boarding-house a messenger-boy handed him a telegram. Flannery tore it open with misgivings.

"Cat has not arrived. Must come on night train. Can accept no excuse," it read.

Flannery folded the telegram carefully and put

it in his hip pocket. He washed his hands with more deliberate care than he had ever spent on them. He adjusted his coat most carefully on his back, and then walked with dignity to his boarding-house. He knew what would happen. There would be an inspector out from the head office in the morning. Flannery would probably have to look for a new job.

In the morning he was up early, but he was still dignified. He did not put on his uniform, but wore his holiday clothes, with the black tie with the red dots. An inspector is a hard man to face, but a man in his best clothes has more of a show against him. Flannery came to the office the back way; there was a possibility of the inspector's being already at the front door. As he crossed the filled-in meadows he poked unhopefully at the soil here and there, but nothing came of it. But suddenly his eyes lighted on a figure that he knew, just turning out of the alley three building from the office. It was Timmy!

Flannery had no chance at all. He ran, but how can a man run in his best clothes across soft, new soil when he is getting a bit too stout? And Timmy had seen him first. When Flannery reached the corner of the alley Timmy was gone, and with a sigh that was partly regret and partly breathlessness from his run Flannery turned into the main street. There was the inspector, sure enough, standing on the curb. Flannery had lost some of his dignity, but he made up for it in anger. He more than made up for it in the heat he

had run himself into. He was red in the face. He met the inspector with a glare of anger.

"There be th' key, if 'tis that ye're wantin', an' ye may take it an' welcome, fer no more will I be ixpriss agint fer a company that sinds long-haired cats dead in a box an' orders me t' kape thim throo th' hot weather fer a fireside companion an' ready riference av perfumery. How t' feed an' water dead cats av th' long-haired kind I may not know, an' how t' live with dead cats I may not know, but whin t' bury dead cats I *do* know, an' there be plinty av other jobs where a man is not ordered t' dig up forty-sivin acres t' find a cat that was buried none too soon at that!"

"What's that?" said the inspector. "Is that cat dead?"

"An' what have I been tellin' th' dudes in th' head office all the while?" asked Flannery with asperity. "What but that th' late deceased dead cat was defunct an' no more? An' thim insultin' an honest man with their 'Have ye stholen th' cat out av th' box, Flannery, an' put in an inferior short-haired cat?' I want no more av thim! Here's the key. Good day t' ye!"

"Hold on," said the inspector, putting his hand on Flannery's arm. "You don't go yet. I'll have a look at your cash and your accounts first. What you say about that cat may be true enough, but we have got to have proof of it. That was a valuable cat, that was. It was an Angora cat, a real Angora cat. You've got to produce that cat before we are through with you."

"Projuce th' cat!" said Flannery angrily. "Th' cat is safe an' sound in th' back lot. I presint ye with th' lot. If 'tis not enough fer ye, go awn an' do th' dirthy worrk ye have t' do awn me. I'll dig no more fer th' cat."

The inspector unlocked the door and entered the office. It was hot with the close heat of a room that has been locked up overnight. Just inside the door the inspector stopped and sniffed suspiciously. No express office should have smelled as that one smelled.

"Wan minute!" cried Flannery, pulling away from the inspector's grasp. "Wan minute! I have a hint there be a long-haired cat near by. Wance ye have been near wan av thim ye can niver mistake thim Angora cats. I w'u'd know th' symbol av thim with me eyes shut. 'Tis a signal ye c'u'd tell in th' darrk."

He hurried to the back door. The cat was there, all right. A little deader than it had been, perhaps, but it was there on the step, long hair and all.

"Hurroo!" shouted Flannery. "An' me thinkin' I w'u'd niver see it again! Can ye smell th' proof, Misther Inspictor? 'Tis good sthrong proof fer ye! An' I sh'u'd have knowed it all th' while. Angora cats I know not be th' spicial species, an' th' long-haired breed av cats is not wan I have associated with much, an' cats so dang dead as this wan I do not kape close in touch with, ginerally, but all cats have a grrand resimblance t' cats. Look at this wan, now. 'Tis just like a cat. It kem back."

THOMAS R. YBARRA

A LITTLE SWIRL OF VERS LIBRE

Not Covered, Strange to Say, by the Penal Code

I am numb from world-pain—
I sway most violently as the thoughts course through me,
And athwart me,
And up and down me—
Thoughts of cosmic matters,
Of the mergings of worlds within worlds,
And unutterabilities
And room-rent,
And other tremendously alarming phenomena,
Which stab me,
Rip me most outrageously;
(Without a semblance, mind you, of respect for the Hague Convention's rules governing soul-slitting.)
Aye, as with the poniard of the Finite pricking the rainbow-bubble of the Infinite!
(Some figure, that!)
(Some little rush of syllables, that!)—
And make me—(are you still whirling at my coat-tails, reader?)
Make me—ahem, where was I?—oh, yes—make me,
In a sudden, overwhelming gust of soul-shattering rebellion,
Fall flat on my face!

JULIAN STREET AND JAMES MONTGOMERY FLAGG

SAID OPIE READ

Said Opie Read to E. P. Roe,
"How do you like Gaboriau?"
"I like him very much indeed!"
Said E. P. Roe to Opie Read.

EUGENE F. WARE

MANILA

Oh, dewy was the morning, upon the first of May,
And Dewey was the admiral, down in Manila Bay;
And dewy were the Regent's eyes, them royal orbs of blue,
And do we feel discouraged? We do not think we do!

ARTEMUS WARD AS A LECTURER

THE
POCKET UNIVERSITY

VOLUME VIII PART II

AMERICAN WIT AND HUMOR

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THOMAS L. MASSON

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AGNES REPPLIER

A PLEA FOR HUMOR

MORE than half a dozen years have passed since Mr. Andrew Lang, startled for once out of his customary light-heartedness, asked himself, and his readers, and the ghost of Charles Dickens—all three powerless to answer—whether the dismal seriousness of the present day was going to last forever; or whether, when the great wave of earnestness had rippled over our heads, we would pluck up heart to be merry and, if needs be, foolish once again. Not that mirth and folly are in any degree synonymous, as of old; for the merry fool, too scarce, alas! even in the times when Jacke of Dover hunted for him in the highways, has since then grown to be rarer than a phenix. He has carried his cap and bells and jests and laughter elsewhere, and has left us to the mercies of the serious fool, who is by no means so seductive a companion. If the Cocquecigrues are in possession of the land, and if they are tenants exceedingly hard to evict, it is because of the encouragement they receive from those to whom we innocently turn for help: from the poets, novelists and men of letters whose duty it is to brighten and make glad our days.

"It is obvious," sighs Mr. Birrell dejectedly, "that many people appear to like a drab-colored world, hung around with dusky shreds of philosophy"; but it is more obvious still that, whether they like it or not, the drapings grow a trifle dingier every year, and that no one seems to have the courage to tack up something gay. What is much worse, even those bits of wanton color which have rested generations of weary eyes are being rapidly obscured by somber and intricate scroll-work, warranted to oppress and fatigue. The great masterpieces of humor, which have kept men young by laughter, are being tried in the courts of an orthodox morality and found lamentably wanting; or else, by way of giving them another chance, they are being subjected to the *peine forte et dure* of modern analysis, and are revealing hideous and melancholy meanings in the process. I have always believed that Hudibras owes its chilly treatment at the hands of critics—with the single and most genial exception of Sainte-Beuve—to the absolute impossibility of twisting it into something serious. Strive as we may, we cannot put a new construction on those vigorous old jokes, and to be simply and barefacedly amusing is no longer considered a sufficient *raison d'être*. It is the most significant token of our ever-increasing "sense of moral responsibility in literature" that we should be always trying to graft our own conscientious purposes upon those authors who, happily for themselves,

lived and died before virtue, colliding desperately with cakes and ale, had imposed such depressing obligations.

"'Don Quixote,'" says Mr. Shorthouse with unctuous gravity, "will come in time to be recognized as one of the saddest books ever written"; and, if the critics keep on expounding it much longer, I truly fear it will. It may be urged that Cervantes himself was low enough to think it exceedingly funny; but then one advantage of our new and keener insight into literature is to prove to us how indifferently great authors understood their own masterpieces. Shakespeare, we are told, knew comparatively little about "Hamlet," and he is to be congratulated on his limitations. Defoe would hardly recognize "Robinson Crusoe" as "a picture of civilization," having innocently supposed it to be quite the reverse; and he would be as amazed as we are to learn from Mr. Frederic Harrison that his book contains "more psychology, more political economy, and more anthropology than are to be found in many elaborate treatises on these especial subjects"—blighting words which I would not even venture to quote if I thought that any boy would chance to read them and so have one of the pleasures of his young life destroyed. As for "Don Quixote," which its author persisted in regarding with such misplaced levity, it has passed through many bewildering vicissitudes. It has figured bravely as a satire on the Duke of Lerma, on Charles V.,

on Philip II., on Ignatius Loyola—Cervantes was the most devout of Catholics—and on the Inquisition, which, fortunately, did not think so. In fact, there is little or nothing which it has not meant in its time; and now, having attained that deep spiritual inwardness which we have been recently told is lacking in poor Goldsmith, we are requested by Mr. Shorthouse to refrain from all brutal laughter, but, with a shadowy smile and a profound seriousness, to attune ourselves to the proper state of receptivity. Old-fashioned, coarse-minded people may perhaps ask, "But if we are not to laugh at 'Don Quixote,' at whom are we, please, to laugh?"—a question which I, for one, would hardly dare to answer. Only, after reading the following curious sentence, extracted from a lately published volume of criticism, I confess to finding myself in a state of mental perplexity utterly alien to mirth. "How much happier," its author sternly reminds us, "was poor Don Quixote in his energetic career, in his earnest redress of wrong, and in his ultimate triumph over self, than he could have been in the gnawing reproach and spiritual stigma which a yielding to weakness never failingly entails!" Beyond this point it would be hard to go. Were these things really spoken of the "ingenious gentleman" of La Mancha or of John Howard or George Peabody or perhaps Elizabeth Fry—or is there no longer such a thing as recognized absurdity in the world?

A Plea for Humor

Another gloomy indication of the departure of humor from our midst is the tendency of philosophical writers to prove by analysis that, if they are not familiar with the thing itself, they at least know of what it should consist. Mr. Shorthouse's depressing views about "Don Quixote" are merely introduced as illustrating a very scholarly and comfortless paper on the subtle qualities of mirth. No one could deal more gracefully and less humorously with his topic than does Mr. Shorthouse, and we are compelled to pause every now and then and reassure ourselves as to the subject matter of his eloquence. Professor Everett has more recently and more cheerfully defined for us the Philosophy of the Comic, in a way which, if it does not add to our gaiety, cannot be accused of plunging us deliberately into gloom. He thinks, indeed—and small wonder—that there is "a genuine difficulty in distinguishing between the comic and the tragic," and that what we need is some formula which shall accurately interpret the precise qualities of each, and he is disposed to illustrate his theory by dwelling on the tragic side of Falstaff, which is, of all injuries, the grimmest and hardest to forgive. Falstaff is now the forlorn hope of those who love to laugh, and when he is taken away from us, as soon, alas! he will be, and sleeps with Don Quixote in the "dull cold marble" of an orthodox sobriety, how shall we make merry our souls? Mr. George Radford,

who enriched the first volume of "Obiter dicta" with such a loving study of the fat-witted old knight, tells us reassuringly that by laughter man is distinguished from the beasts, though the cares and sorrows of life have all but deprived him of this elevating grace and degraded him into a brutal solemnity. Then comes along a rare genius like Falstaff, who restores the power of laughter, and transforms the stolid brute once more into a man, and who accordingly has the highest claim to our grateful and affectionate regard. That there are those who persist in looking upon him as a selfish and worthless fellow is, from Mr. Radford's point of view, a sorrowful instance of human thanklessness and perversity. But this I take to be the enamored and exaggerated language of a too faithful partizan. Morally speaking, Falstaff has not a leg to stand upon, and there *is* a tragic element lurking always amid the fun. But, seen in the broad sunlight of his transcendent humor, this shadow is as the half-pennyworth of bread to his own noble ocean of sack, and why should we be forever trying to force it into prominence? When Charlotte Brontë advised her friend Ellen Nussey to read none of Shakespeare's comedies, she was not beguiled for a moment into regarding them as serious and melancholy lessons of life; but with uncompromising directness put them down as mere improper plays, the amusing qualities of which were insufficient to excuse their coarse-

ness, and which were manifestly unfit for the "gentle Ellen's" eyes.

In fact, humor would at all times have been the poorest excuse to offer to Miss Brontë for any form of moral dereliction, for it was the one quality she lacked herself and failed to tolerate in others. Sam Weller was apparently as obnoxious to her as was Falstaff, for she would not even consent to meet Dickens when she was being lionized in London society—a degree of abstemiousness on her part which it is disheartening to contemplate. It does not seem too much to say that every shortcoming in Charlotte Brontë's admirable work, every limitation in her splendid genius, arose primarily from her want of humor. Her severities of judgment—and who more severe than she?—were due to the same melancholy cause; for humor is the kindliest thing alive. Compare the harshness with which she handles her hapless curates and the comparative crudity of her treatment, with the surprising lightness of Miss Austen's touch as she rounds and completes her immortal clerical portraits. Miss Brontë tells us, in one of her letters, that she regarded *all* curates as "highly uninteresting, narrow, and unattractive specimens of the coarser sex," just as she found *all* the Belgian schoolgirls "cold, selfish, animal and inferior." But to Miss Austen's keen and friendly eye the narrowest of clergymen was not wholly uninteresting, the most inferior of schoolgirls not without some

claim to our consideration; even the coarseness of the male sex was far from vexing her maidenly serenity, probably because she was unacquainted with the Rochester type. Mr. Elton is certainly narrow, Mary Bennet extremely inferior; but their authoress only laughs at them softly, with a quiet tolerance and a good-natured sense of amusement at their follies. It was little wonder that Charlotte Brontë, who had at all times the courage of her convictions, could not and would not read Jane Austen's novels. "They have not got story enough for me," she boldly affirmed. "I don't want my blood curdled, but I like to have it stirred. Miss Austen strikes me as milk-and-watery and, to say truth, dull." Of course she did! How was a woman, whose ideas of after-dinner conversation are embodied in the amazing language of Baroness Ingram and her titled friends to appreciate the delicious, sleepy small-talk in "Sense and Sensibility," about the respective heights of the respective grandchildren? It is to Miss Brontë's abiding lack of humor that we owe such stately caricatures as Blanche Ingram and all the high-born, ill-bred company who gather in Thornfield Hall, like a group fresh from Madame Tussaud's ingenious workshop, and against whose waxen unreality Jane Eyre and Rochester, alive to their very finger-tips, contrast like twin sparks of fire. It was her lack of humor, too, which beguiled her into asserting that the forty "wicked, sophistical and immoral

French novels" which found their way down to lonely Haworth gave her "a thorough idea of France and Paris"—alas! poor, misjudged France!—and which made her think Thackeray very nearly as wicked, sophistical and immoral as the French novels. Even her dislike for children was probably due to the same irremediable misfortune; for the humors of children are the only redeeming points amid their general naughtiness and vexing misbehavior. Mr. Swinburne, guiltless himself of any jocose tendencies, has made the unique discovery that Charlotte Brontë strongly resembles Cervantes, and that Paul Emanuel is a modern counterpart of Don Quixote; and well it is for our poet that the irascible little professor never heard him hint at such a similarity. Surely, to use one of Mr. Swinburne's own incomparable expressions, the parallel is no better than a "subsimious absurdity."

On the other hand, we are told that Miss Austen owed her lively sense of humor to her habit of dissociating the follies of mankind from any rigid standard of right and wrong; which means, I suppose, that she never dreamed she had a mission. Nowadays, indeed, no writer is without one. We cannot even read a paper upon gypsies and not become aware that its author is deeply imbued with a sense of his personal responsibility for these agreeable rascals whom he insists upon our taking seriously —as if we wanted to have anything to do with

them on such terms! "Since the time of Carlyle," says Mr. Bagehot, "earnestness has been a favorite virtue in literature"; but Carlyle, though sharing largely in that profound melancholy which he declared to be the basis of every English soul, and though he was unfortunate enough to think Pickwick sad trash, had nevertheless a grim and eloquent humor of his own. With him, at least, earnestness never degenerated into dulness; and while dulness may be, as he unhesitatingly affirmed, the first requisite for a great and free people, yet a too heavy percentage of this valuable quality is fatal to the sprightly grace of literature. "In our times," said an old Scotchwoman, "there's fully mony modern principles," and the first of these seems to be the substitution of a serious and critical discernment for the light-hearted sympathy of former days. Our grandfathers cried a little and laughed a good deal over their books, without the smallest sense of anxiety or responsibility in the matter; but we are called on repeatedly to face problems which we would rather let alone, to dive dismally into motives, to trace subtle connections, to analyze uncomfortable sensations, and to exercise in all cases a discreet and conscientious severity, when what we really want and need is half an hour's amusement. There is no stronger proof of the great change that has swept over mankind than the sight of a nation which used to chuckle over "Tom Jones" absorbing a few years ago

countless editions of "Robert Elsmere." What is droller still is that the people who read "Robert Elsmere" would think it wrong to enjoy "Tom Jones," and that the people who enjoyed "Tom Jones" would have thought it wrong to read "Robert Elsmere"; and that the people who, wishing to be on the safe side of virtue, think it wrong to read either, are scorned greatly as lacking true moral discrimination.

Now he would be a brave man who would undertake to defend the utterly indefensible literature of the past. Where it was most humorous it was also most coarse, wanton and cruel; but, in banishing these objectionable qualities, we have effectually contrived to rid ourselves of the humor as well, and with it we have lost one of the safest instincts of our souls. Any book which serves to lower the sum of human gaiety is a moral delinquent; and instead of coddling it into universal notice and growing owlish in its gloom, we should put it briskly aside in favor of brighter and pleasanter things. When Father Faber said that there was no greater help to a religious life than a keen sense of the ridiculous, he startled a number of pious people, yet what a luminous and cordial message it was to help us on our way! Mr. Birrell has recorded the extraordinary delight with which he came across some after-dinner sally of the Reverend Henry Martyn's; for the very thought of that ardent and fiery spirit relaxing into pleasantries over the nuts and wine made him

appear like an actual fellow-being of our own. It is with the same feeling intensified, as I have already noted, that we read some of the letters of the early fathers—those grave and hallowed figures seen through a mist of centuries—and find them jesting at one another in the gayest and least sacerdotal manner imaginable. "Who could tell a story with more wit, who could joke so pleasantly?" sighs St. Gregory of Nazienzen of his friend St. Basil, remembering doubtless with a heavy heart the shafts of good-humored raillery that had brightened their lifelong intercourse. With what kindly and loving zest does Gregory, himself the most austere of men, mock at Basil's asceticism—at those "sad and hungry banquets" of which he was invited to partake, those "ungarden-like gardens, void of pot-herbs," in which he was expected to dig! With what delightful alacrity does Basil vindicate his reputation for humor by making a most excellent joke in court, for the benefit of a brutal magistrate who fiercely threatened to tear out his liver! "Your intention is a benevolent one," said the saint, who had been for years a confirmed invalid. "Where it is now located, it has given me nothing but trouble." Surely, as we read such an anecdote as this, we share in the curious sensation experienced by little Tom Tulliver, when, by dint of Maggie's repeated questions, he began slowly to understand that the Romance had once been real men, who were happy enough to speak

their own language without any previous introduction to the Eton grammar. In like manner, when we come to realize that the fathers of the primitive church enjoyed their quips and cranks and jests as much as do Mr. Trollope's jolly deans or vicars, we feel we have at last grasped the secret of their identity, and we appreciate the force of Father Faber's appeal to the frank spirit of a wholesome mirth.

Perhaps one reason for the scanty tolerance that humor receives at the hands of the disaffected is because of the rather selfish way in which the initiated enjoy their fun; for there is always a secret irritation about a laugh in which we cannot join. Mr. George Saintsbury is plainly of this way of thinking, and, being blessed beyond his fellows with a love for all that is jovial, he speaks from out of the richness of his experience. "Those who have a sense of humor," he says, "instead of being quietly and humbly thankful, are perhaps a little too apt to celebrate their joy in the face of the afflicted ones who have it not; and the afflicted ones only follow a general law in protesting that it is a very worthless thing, if not a complete humbug." This spirit of exclusiveness on the one side and of irascibility on the other may be greatly deplored, but who is there among us, I wonder, wholly innocent of blame? Mr. Saintsbury himself confesses to a silent chuckle of delight when he thinks of the dimly veiled censoriousness with which Peacock's inimitable

humor has been received by one-half of the reading world. In other words, his enjoyment of the Reverend Doctors Folliott and Opimian is sensibly increased by the reflection that a great many worthy people, even among his own acquaintances, are, by some mysterious law of their being, debarred from any share in his pleasure. Yet surely we need not be so niggardly in this matter. There is wit enough in those two reverend gentlemen to go all around the living earth and leave plenty for generations now unborn. Each might say with Juliet:

> "The more I give to thee,
> The more I have;"

for wit is as infinite as love, and a deal more lasting in its qualities. When Peacock describes a country gentleman's range of ideas as "nearly commensurate with that of the great king Nebuchadnezzar when he was turned out to grass," he affords us a happy illustration of the eternal fitness of humor, for there can hardly come a time when such an apt comparison will fail to point its meaning.

Mr. Birrell is quite as selfish in his felicity as Mr. Saintsbury, and perfectly frank in acknowledging it. He dwells rapturously over certain well-loved pages of "Pride and Prejudice" and "Mansfield Park," and then deliberately adds, "When an admirer of Miss Austen reads these familiar passages, the smile of satisfaction, betraying the deep inward peace they never fail

to beget, widens like 'a circle in the water,' as he remembers (and he is always careful to remember) how his dearest friend, who has been so successful in life, can no more read Miss Austen than he can read the Moabitish stone." The same peculiarity is noticeable in the more ardent lovers of Charles Lamb. They seem to want him all to themselves, look askance upon any fellow-being who ventures to assert a modest preference for their idol, and brighten visibly when some ponderous critic declares the Letters to be sad stuff and not worth half the exasperating nonsense talked about them. Yet Lamb flung his good things to the wind with characteristic prodigality, little recking by whom or in what spirit they were received. How many witticisms, I wonder, were roared into the deaf ears of old Thomas Westwood, who heard them not, alas! but who laughed all the same, out of pure sociability, and with a pleasant sense that something funny had been said! And what of that ill-fated pun which Lamb, in a moment of deplorable abstraction, let fall at a funeral, to the surprise and consternation of the mourners? Surely a man who could joke at a funeral never meant his pleasantries to be hoarded up for the benefit of an initiated few, but would gladly see them the property of all living men; ay, and of all dead men, too, were such a distribution possible. "Damn the age! I will write for antiquity!" he exclaimed with not unnatural heat when the "Gypsy's Malison" was rejected

by the ingenious editors of the *Gem*, on the ground that it would "shock all mothers"; and even this expression, uttered with pardonable irritation, manifests no solicitude for a narrow and esoteric audience.

"Wit is useful for everything, but sufficient for nothing," says Amiel, who probably felt he needed some excuse for burying so much of his Gallic sprightliness in Teutonic gloom; and dulness, it must be admitted, has the distinct advantage of being useful for everybody and sufficient for nearly everybody as well. Nothing, we are told, is more rational than ennui; and Mr. Bagehot, contemplating the "grave files of speechless men" who have always represented the English land, exults more openly and energetically even than Carlyle in the saving dulness, the superb impenetrability, which stamps the Englishman, as it stamped the Roman, with the sign-manual of patient strength. Stupidity, he reminds us, is not folly, and moreover it often insures a valuable consistency. "What I says is this here, as I was a-saying yesterday, is the average Englishman's notion of historical eloquence and habitual discretion." But Mr. Bagehot could well afford to trifle thus coyly with dulness, because he knew it only theoretically and as a dispassionate observer. His own roof-tree is free from the blighting presence; his own pages are guiltless of the leaden touch. It has been well said that an ordinary mortal might live for a twelvemonth

like a gentleman on Hazlitt's ideas; but he might, if he were clever, shine all his life long with the reflected splendor of Mr. Bagehot's wit, and be thought to give forth a very respectable illumination. There is a telling quality in every stroke; a pitiless dexterity that drives the weapon, like a fairy's arrow, straight to some vital point. When we read that "of all pursuits ever invented by man for separating the faculty of argument from the capacity of belief, the art of debating is probably the most effective," we feel that an unwelcome statement has been expressed with Mephistophelian coolness; and remembering that these words were uttered before Mr. Gladstone had attained his parliamentary preëminence, we have but another proof of the imperishable accuracy of wit. Only say a clever thing, and mankind will go on forever furnishing living illustrations of its truth. It was Thurlow who originally remarked that, "companies have neither bodies to kick nor souls to lose," and the jest fits in so aptly with our everyday humors and experiences that I have heard men attribute it casually to their friends, thinking, perhaps, that it must have been born in these times of giant corporations, of city railroads, and of trusts. What a gap between Queen Victoria and Queen Bess; what a thorough and far-reaching change in everything that goes to make up the life and habits of men; and yet Shakespeare's fine strokes of humor have become so fitted to our common

speech that the very unconsciousness with which we apply them proves how they tally with our modern emotions and opportunities. Lesser lights burn quite as steadily. Pope and Goldsmith reappear on the lips of people whose knowledge of the "Essay on Man" is of the very haziest character, and whose acquaintance with "She Stoops to Conquer" is confined exclusively to Mr. Abbey's graceful illustrations. Not very long ago I heard a bright schoolgirl, when reproached for wet feet or some such youthful indiscretion, excuse herself gaily on the plea that she was "bullying nature"; and, knowing that the child was but modestly addicted to her books, I wondered how many of Doctor Holmes's trenchant sayings have become a heritage in our households, detached often from their original kinship, and seeming like the rightful property of every one who utters them. It is an amusing, barefaced, witless sort of robbery, yet surely not without its compensations; for it must be a pleasant thing to reflect in old age that the general murkiness of life has been lit up here and there by sparks struck from one's youthful fire, and that these sparks, though they wander occasionally masterless as will-o'-the-wisps, are destined never to go out.

Are destined never to go out! In its vitality lies the supreme excellence of humor. Whatever has "wit enough to keep it sweet" defies corruption and outlasts all time; but the wit must be of that outward and visible order which

needs no introduction or demonstration at our hands. It is an old trick with dull novelists to describe their characters as being exceptionally brilliant people, and to trust that we will take their word for it and ask no further proof. Every one remembers how Lord Beaconsfield would tell us that a cardinal could "sparkle with anecdote and blaze with repartee"; and how utterly destitute of sparkle or blaze were the specimens of His Eminence's conversation with which we were subsequently favored. Those "lively dinners" in "Endymion" and "Lothair" at which we were assured the brightest minds in England loved to gather became mere Barmecide feasts when reported to us without a single amusing remark, such waifs and strays of conversation as reached our ears being of the dreariest and most fatuous description. It is not so with the real masters of their craft. Mr. Peacock does not stop to explain to us that Doctor Folliott is witty. The reverend gentleman opens his mouth and acquaints us with the fact himself. There is no need for George Eliot to expatiate on Mrs. Poyser's humor Five minutes of that lady's society is amply sufficient for the revelation. We do not even hear Mr. Poyser and the rest of the family enlarging delightedly on the subject, as do all of Lawyer Putney's friends, in Mr. Howells's story, "Annie Kilburn"; and yet even the united testimony of Hatboro' fails to clear up our lingering doubts concerning Mr. Putney's wit. The dull people

of that soporific town are really and truly and realistically dull. There is no mistaking them. The stamp of veracity is upon every brow. They pay morning calls, and we listen to their conversation with a dreamy impression that we have heard it all many times before, and that the ghosts of our own morning calls are revisiting us, not in the glimpses of the moon, but in Mr. Howells's decorous and quiet pages. That curious conviction that we have formerly passed through a precisely similar experience is strong upon us as we read, and it is the most emphatic testimony to the novelist's peculiar skill. But there is none of this instantaneous acquiescence in Mr. Putney's wit; for although he does make one very nice little joke, it is hardly enough to flavor all his conversation, which is for the most part rather unwholesome than humorous. The only way to elucidate him is to suppose that Mr. Howells, in sardonic mood, wishes to show us that if a man be discreet enough to take to hard drinking in his youth, before his general emptiness is ascertained, his friends invariably credit him with a host of shining qualities which, we are given to understand he balked and frustrated by his one unfortunate weakness. How many of us know these exceptionally brilliant lawyers, doctors, politicians and journalists who bear a charmed reputat on based exclusively upon their inebriety, and who take good care not to imperil it by too long a relapse into the mortifying self-revelations

of soberness! And what wrong has been done to the honored name of humor by these pretentious rascals! We do not love Falstaff because he is drunk; we do not admire Becky Sharp because she is wicked. Drunkenness and wickedness are things easy of imitation; yet all the sack in Christendom could not beget us another Falstaff—though Seithenyn ap Seithyn comes very near to the incomparable model—and all the wickedness in the world could not fashion us a second Becky Sharp. There are too many dull topers and stupid sinners among mankind to admit of any uncertainty on these points.

Bishop Burnet, in describing Lord Halifax, tells us, with thinly veiled disapprobation, that he was "a man of fine and ready wit, full of life, and very pleasant, but much turned to atire. His imagination was too hard for his judgment, and a severe jest took more with him than all arguments whatever." Yet this was the first statesman of his age, and one whose clear and tranquil vision penetrated so far beyond the turbulent, troubled times he lived in that men looked askance upon a power they but dimly understood. The sturdy "Trimmer," who would be bullied neither by king nor commons, who would "speak his mind and not be hanged as long as there was law in England," must have turned with infinite relief from the horrible medley of plots and counterplots, from the ugly images of Oates

and Dangerfield, from the scaffolds of Stafford and Russell and Sidney, from the Bloody Circuit and the massacre of Glencoe, from the false smiles of princes and the howling arrogance of the mob, to any jest, however "severe," which would restore to him his cold and fastidious serenity and keep his judgment and his good temper unimpaired. "Ridicule is the test of truth," said Hazlitt, and it is a test which Halifax remorselessly applied, and which would not be without its uses to the Trimmer of to-day, in whom this adjusting sense is lamentably lacking. For humor distorts nothing, and only false gods are laughed off their earthly pedestals. What monstrous absurdities and paradoxes have resisted whole batteries of serious arguments, and then crumbled swiftly into dust before the ringing death-knell of a laugh! What healthy exultation, what genial mirth, what loyal brotherhood of mirth attends the friendly sound! Yet in labeling our life and literature, as the Danes labeled their Royal Theatre in Copenhagen, "Not for amusement merely," we have pushed one step further, and the legend too often stands, "Not for amusement at all." Life is no laughing matter, we are told, which is true; and, what is still more dismal to contemplate, books are no laughing matters, either. Only now and then some gay, defiant rebel, like Mr. Saintsbury, flaunts the old flag, hums a bar of "Blue Bonnets over the Border," and ruffles the quiet waters of our

souls by hinting that this age of Apollinaris and of lectures is at fault, and that it has produced nothing which can vie as literature with the products of the ages of wine and song.

MARIETTA HOLLEY

AN UNMARRIED FEMALE

I SUPPOSE we are about as happy as the most of folks, but as I was sayin' a few days ago to Betsey Bobbet, a neighborin' female of ours—"Every station-house in life has its various skeletons. But we ort to try to be contented with that spear of life we are called on to handle." Betsey hain't married, and she don't seem to be contented. She is awful opposed to wimmin's rights—she thinks it is wimmin's only spear to marry, but as yet she can't find any man willin' to lay holt of that spear with her. But you can read in her daily life, and on her eager, willin' countenance, that she fully realizes the sweet words of the poet, "While there is life there is hope."

Betsey hain't handsome. Her cheek-bones are high, and she bein' not much more than skin and bone they show plainer than they would if she was in good order. Her complexion (not that I blame her for it) hain't good, and her eyes are little and sot way back in her head. Time has seen fit to deprive her of her hair and teeth, but her large nose he has kindly suffered her to keep, but she has got the best white ivory teeth money will buy, and two long curls

fastened behind each ear, besides frizzles on the top of her head; and if she wasn't naturally bald, and if the curls was the color of her hair, they would look well. She is awful sentimental; I have seen a good many that had it bad, but of all the sentimental creeters I ever did see, Betsey Bobbet is the sentimentalest; you couldn't squeeze a laugh out of her with a cheeze-press.

As I said, she is awful opposed to wimmin's havin' any right, only the right to get married. She holds on to that right as tight as any single woman I ever see, which makes it hard and wearyin' on the single men round here.

For take the men that are the most opposed to wimmin's havin' a right, and talk the most about its bein' her duty to cling to man like a vine to a tree, they don't want Betsey to cling to them; they *won't let* her cling to 'em. For when they would be a-goin' on about how wicked it was for wimmin to vote—and it was her only spear to marry, says I to 'em, "Which had you ruther do, let Betsey Bobbet cling to you or let her vote?" and they would every one of 'em quail before that question. They would drop their heads before my keen gray eyes—and move off the subject.

But Betsey don't get discouraged. Every time I see her she says in a hopeful, wishful tone, "That the deepest men of minds in the country agree with her in thinkin' that it is wimmin's duty to marry and not to vote." And then she talks a sight about the retirin'

modesty and dignity of the fair sect, and how shameful and revoltin' it would be to see wimmin throwin' 'em away and boldly and unblushin'ly talkin' about law and justice.

Why, to hear Betsey Bobbet talk about wimmin's throwin' their modesty away, you would think if they ever went to the political pole they would have to take their dignity and modesty and throw 'em against the pole and go without any all the rest of their lives.

Now I don't believe in no such stuff as that. I think a woman can be bold and unwomanly in other things besides goin' with a thick veil over her face, and a brass-mounted parasol, once a year, and gently and quietly dropping a vote for a Christian President, or a religious and noble-minded pathmaster.

She thinks she talks dreadful polite and proper. She says "I was cameing," instead of "I was coming"; and "I have saw," instead of "I have seen"; and "papah" for paper, and "deah" for dear. I don't know much about grammer, but common sense goes a good ways. She writes the poetry for the *Jonesville Augur*, or "*Augah*," as she calls it. She used to write for the opposition paper, the *Jonesville Gimlet*, but the editor of the *Augur*, a long-haired chap, who moved into Jonesville a few months ago, lost his wife soon after he come there, and sense that she has turned Dimocrat, and writes for his paper stidy. They say that he is a dreadful big feelin' man, and I have heard

—it came right straight to me—his cousin's wife's sister told it to the mother-in-law of one of my neighbors' brother's wife, that he didn't like Betsey's poetry at all, and all he printed it for was to plague the editor of the *Gimlet*, because she used to write for him. I myself wouldn't give a cent a bushel for all the poetry she can write. And it seems to me, that if I was Betsey, I wouldn't try to write so much. Howsumever, I don't know what turn I should take if I was Betsey Bobbet; that is a solemn subject, and one I don't love to think on.

I never shall forget the first piece of her poetry I ever see. Josiah Allen and I had both on us been married goin' on a year, and I had occasion to go to his trunk one day, where he kept a lot of old papers, and the first thing I laid my hand on was these verses. Josiah went with her a few times after his wife died, on Fourth of July or so, and two or three camp-meetin's and the poetry seemed to be wrote about the time *we* was married. It was directed over the top of it, "Owed to Josiah," just as if she were in debt to him. This was the way it read:

"OWED TO JOSIAH

"Josiah, I the tale have hurn,
With rigid ear, and streaming eye,
I saw from me that you did turn,
I never knew the reason why.
Oh, Josiah,
It seemed as if I must expiah.

"Why did you—oh, why did you blow
Upon my life of snowy sleet,
The fiah of love to fiercest glow,
Then turn a damphar on the heat?
Oh, Josiah,
It seemed as if I must expiah.

"I saw thee coming down the street,
She by your side in bonnet bloo,
The stuns that grated 'neath thy feet,
Seemed crunching on my vitals, too.
Oh, Josiah,
It seemed as if I must expiah.

"I saw thee washing sheep last night,
On the bridge I stood with marble brow,
The waters raged, thou clasped it tight,
I sighed, 'should both be drownded now'—
I thought, Josiah,
Oh, happy sheep to thus expiah."

I showed the poetry to Josiah that night after he came home, and told him I had read it. He looked awful ashamed to think I had seen it, and, says he, with a dreadful sheepish look: "The persecution I underwent from that female can never be told; she fairly hunted me down. I hadn't no rest for the soles of my feet. I thought one spell she would marry me in spite of all I could do, without givin' me the benefit of law or gospel." He see I looked stern, and he added, with a sick-lookin' smile, "I thought one spell, to use Betsey's language, 'I was a gonah.'"

I didn't smile. Oh, no, for the deep principle of my sect was reared up. I says to him in a

tone cold enough to almost freeze his ears: "Josiah Allen, shet up; of all the cowardly things a man ever done, it is goin 'round braggin' about wimmin likin' 'em, and follern' 'em up. Enny man that'll do that is little enough to crawl through a knot-hole without rubbing his clothes." Says I: "I suppose you made her think the moon rose in your head and set in your heels. I daresay you acted foolish enough round her to sicken a snipe, and if you makes fun of her now to please me, I let you know you have got holt of the wrong individual.

"Now," says I, "go to bed"; and I added, in still more freezing accents, "for I want to mend your pantaloons." He gathered up his shoes and stockin's and started off to bed, and we hain't never passed a word on the subject sence. I believe when you disagree with your pardner, in freein' your *mind* in the first on't, and then not to be a-twittin' about it afterward. And as for bein' jealous, I should jest as soon think of bein' jealous of a meetin'-house as I should of Josiah. He is a well-principled man. And I guess he wasn't fur out o' the way about Betsey Bobbet, though I wouldn't encourage him by lettin' him say a word on the subject, for I always make it a rule to stand up for my own sect; but when I hear her go on about the editor of the *Augur*, I can believe anything about Betsey Bobbet.

She came in here one day last week. It was about ten o'clock in the morning. I had got

my house slick as a pin, and my dinner under way (I was goin' to have a b'iled dinner, and a cherry puddin' b'iled with sweet sass to eat on it), and I sot down to finish sewin' up the breadth of my new rag carpet. I thought I would get it done while I hadn't so much to do, for it bein' the first of March I knew sugarin' would be comin' on, and then cleanin'-house time, and I wanted it to put down jest as soon as the stove was carried out in the summer kitchen. The fire was sparklin' away, and the painted floor a-shinin' and the dinner a-b'ilin', and I sot there sewin' jest as calm as a clock, not dreamin' of no trouble, when in came Betsey Bobbet.

I met her with outward calm, and asked her to set down and lay off her things. She sot down but she said she couldn't lay off her things. Says she: "I was comin' down past, and I thought I would call and let you see the last numbah of the *Augah*. There is a piece in it concernin' the tariff that stirs men's souls. I like it evah so much."

She handed me the paper folded, so I couldn't see nothin' but a piece of poetry by Betsey Bobbet. I see what she wanted of me, and so I dropped my breadths of carpetin' and took hold of it, and began to read it.

"Read it audible, if you please," says she. "Especially the precious remahks ovah it; it is such a feast for me to be a-sittin' and heah it rehearsed by a musical vorce."

Says I, "I s'pose I can rehearse it if it will do you any good," so I began as follows:

"It is seldom that we present the readers of the *Augur* (the best paper for the fireside in Jonesville or the world) with a poem like the following. It may be, by the assistance of the *Augur* (only twelve shillings a year in advance, wood and potatoes taken in exchange), the name of Betsey Bobbet will yet be carved on the lofty pinnacle of fame's towering pillow. We think, however, that she could study such writers as Sylvanus Cobb and Tupper with profit both to herself and to them.

"EDITOR OF THE AUGUR."

Here Betsey interrupted me. "The deah editah of the *Augah* has no need to advise me to read Tuppah, for he is indeed my most favorite authar. You have devorhed him, haven't you, Josiah's Allen wife?"

"Devoured who?" says I, in a tone pretty near as cold as a cold icicle.

"Mahten, Fahqueah, Tuppah, that sweet authar," says she.

"No, mom," says I shortly; "I hain't devoured Martin Farquhar Tupper, nor no other man. I hain't a cannibal."

"Oh! you understand me not; I meant, devorhed his sweet, tender lines."

"I hain't devoured his tenderlines, nor nothin' relatin' to him," and I made a motion to lay the paper down, but Betsey urged me to go on, and so I read:

"GUSHINGS OF A TENDAH SOUL

"Oh let who will,
Oh let who can,
Be tied onto
A horrid male man.

"Thus said I 'ere
My tendah heart was touched,
Thus said I 'ere
My tendah feelings gushed.

"But oh a change
Hath swept ore me,
As billows sweep
The 'deep blue sea.'

"A voice, a noble form
One day I saw;
An arrow flew,
My heart is nearly raw.

"His first pardner lies
Beneath the turf,
He is wandering now,
In sorrow's briny surf.

"Two twins, the little
Deah cherub creechahs
Now wipe the teahs
From off his classic feachahs.

"Oh sweet lot, worthy
Angel arisen,
To wipe teahs
From eyes like hisen.

"What think you of it?" says she, as I finished readin'.

I looked right at her 'most a minute with a majestic look. In spite of her false curls and her new white ivory teeth, she is a humbly critter. I looked at her silently while she sot and twisted her long yellow bunnet-strings, and then I spoke out. "Hain't the editor of the *Augur* a widower with a pair of twins?"

"Yes," says she with a happy look.

Then says I, "If the man hain't a fool, he'll think you are one."

"Oh!" says she, and she dropped her bunnet-strings and clasped her long bony hands together in her brown cotton gloves. "Oh, we ahdent soles of genious have feelin's you cold, practical natures know nuthing of, and if they did not gush out in poetry we should expiah. You may as well try to tie up the gushing catarack of Niagarah with a piece of welting-cord as to tie up the feelin's of an ahdent sole."

"Ardent sole!" says I coldly. "Which makes the most noise, Betsey Bobbet, a three-inch brook or a ten-footer? which is the tearer? which is the roarer? Deep waters run stillest. I have no faith in feelin's that stalk round in public in mournin' weeds. I have no faith in such mourners," says I.

"Oh, Josiah's wife, cold, practical female being, you know me not; we are sundered as fah apart as if you was sitting on the North Pole and I was sitting on the South Pole. Uncongenial being, you know me not."

"I may not know you, Betsey Bobbet, but I do know decency, and I know that no munny would tempt me to write such stuff as that poetry and send it to a widower with twins."

"Oh!" says she, "what appeals to the tendah feelin' heart of a single female woman more than to see a lonely man who has lost his relict? And pity never seems so much like pity as when

it is given to the deah little children of widowehs. And," says she, "I think moah than as likely as not, this soaring sole of genious did not wed his affinity, but was united to a mere woman of clay."

"Mere woman of clay!" says I, fixin' my spektacles upon her in a most searchin' manner. "Where will you find a woman, Betsey Bobbet, that hain't more or less clay? And affinity, that is the meanest word I ever heard; no married woman has any right to hear it. I'll excuse you, bein' a female; but if a man had said it to me I'd holler to Josiah. There is a time for everything, and the time to hunt affinity is before you are married; married folks hain't no right to hunt it," says I sternly.

"We kindred soles soah above such petty feelin's—we soah far above them."

"I hain't much of a soarer," says I, "and I don't pretend to be; and to tell you the truth," says I, "I am glad I ain't."

"The editah of the *Augah*," says she, and she grasped the paper offen the stand, and folded it up, and presented it at me like a spear, "the editah of this paper is a kindred sole: he appreciates me, he undahstands me, and will not our names in the pages of this very papah go down to posterety togathah?"

"Then," says I, drove out of all patience with her, "I wish you was there now, both of you. I wish," says I, lookin' fixedly on her, "I wish you was both of you in posterity now."

ROBERT JONES BURDETTE

RHEUMATISM MOVEMENT CURE

One day, not a great while ago, Mr. Middlerib read in his favorite paper a paragraph stating that the sting of a bee was a sure cure for rheumatism, and citing several remarkable instances in which people had been perfectly cured by this abrupt remedy. Mr. Middlerib thought of the rheumatic twinges that grappled his knees once in awhile and made his life a burden.

He read the article several times and pondered over it. He understood that the stinging must be done scientifically and thoroughly. The bee, as he understood the article, was to be griped by the ears and set down upon the rheumatic joint and held there until it stung itself stingless. He had some misgivings about the matter. He knew it would hurt. He hardly thought it could hurt any worse than the rheumatism, and it had been so many years since he was stung by a bee that he had almost forgotten what it felt like. He had, however, a general feeling that it would hurt some. But desperate diseases require desperate remedies, and Mr. Middlerib was willing to undergo any amount of suffering if it would cure his rheumatism.

He contracted with Master Middlerib for a limited supply of bees; humming and buzzing about in the summer air, Mr. Middlerib did not know how to get them. He felt, however, that he could safely depend upon the instincts and methods of boyhood. He knew that if there was any way in heaven whereby the shyest bee that ever lifted a two hundred pound man off the clover could be induced to enter a wide-mouthed glass bottle, his son knew that way.

For the small sum of one dime Master Middlerib agreed to procure several, to wit: six bees, sex and age not specified; but, as Mr. Middlerib was left in uncertainty as to the race, it was made obligatory upon the contractor to have three of them honey and three humble, or, in the generally accepted vernacular, bumblebees. Mr. M. did not tell his son what he wanted those bees for, and the boy went off on his mission with his head so full of astonishment that it fairly whirled. Evening brings all home, and the last rays of the declining sun fell upon Master Middlerib with a short, wide-mouthed bottle comfortably populated with hot, ill-natured bees, and Mr. Middlerib and a dime. The dime and the bottle changed hands. Mr. Middlerib put the bottle in his coat pocket and went into the house eyeing everybody he met very suspiciously, as though he had made up his mind to sting to death the first person who said "bee" to him. He confided his guilty secret to none of his family. He hid his bees

in his bedroom, and as he looked at them just before putting them away he half wished the experiment was safely over. He wished the imprisoned bees did not look so hot and cross. With exquisite care he submerged the bottle in a basin of water and let a few drops in on the heated inmates to cool them off.

At the tea table he had a great fright. Miss Middlerib, in the artless simplicity of her romantic nature, said:

"I smell bees. How the odor brings up——"

But her father glared at her and said, with superfluous harshness and execrable grammar: "Hush up! You don't smell nothing."

Whereupon Mrs. Middlerib asked him if he had eaten anything that disagreed with him, and Miss Middlerib said:

"Why, pa!" and Master Middlerib smiled as he wondered.

Bedtime at last, and the night was warm and sultry. Under various false pretenses, Mr. Middlerib strolled about the house until everybody else was in bed, and then he sought his room. He turned the lamp down until its feeble ray shone dimly as a death-light.

Mr. Middlerib disrobed slowly—very slowly. When at last he was ready to go lumbering into his peaceful couch, he heaved a profound sigh, so full of apprehension and grief that Mrs. Middlerib, who was awakened by it, said if it gave him so much pain to come to bed perhaps he had better sit up all night. Mr. Middlerib

choked another sigh, but said nothing and crept into bed. After lying still a few moments he reached out and got his bottle of bees.

It was not an easy thing to do to pick one bee out of the bottle with his fingers and not get into trouble. The first bee Mr. Middlerib got was a little brown honey-bee, that wouldn't weigh half an ounce if you picked him up by the ears, but if you lifted him by the hind leg would weigh as much as the last end of a bay mule. Mr. Middlerib could not repress a groan.

"What's the matter with you?' sleepily asked his wife.

It was very hard for Mr. Middlerib to say he only felt hot, but he did it. He didn't have to lie about it, either. He did feel very hot indeed—about eighty-six all over, and one hundred and ninety-seven on the end of his thumb. He reversed the bee and pressed the warlike terminus of it firmly against the rheumatic knee.

It didn't hurt so badly as he thought it would.

It didn't hurt at all.

Then Mr. Middlerib remembered that when the honey-bee stabs a human foe it generally leaves its harpoon in the wound, and the invalid knew that the only thing this bee had to sting with was doing its work at the end of his thumb.

He reached his arm out from under the sheets and dropped this disabled atom of rheumatism liniment on the carpet. Then, after a second of blank wonder, he began to feel round

for the bottle, and wished he knew what he did with it.

In the meantime strange things had been going on. When he caught hold of the first bee, Mr. Middlerib, for reasons, drew it out in such haste that for a time he forgot all about the bottle and its remedial contents, and left it lying uncorked in the bed, between himself and his innocent wife. In the darkness there had been a quiet but general emigration from that bottle. The bees, their wings clogged with the water Mr. Middlerib had poured upon them to cool and tranquillize them, were crawling aimlessly over the sheet. While Mr. Middlerib was feeling around for it, his ears were suddenly thrilled and his heart frozen by a wild, piercing scream from his wife.

"Murder!" she screamed. "Murder! Oh! Help me! Help! Help!"

Mr. Middlerib sat bolt upright in bed. His hair stood on end. The night was warm, but he turned to ice in a minute.

"Where in thunder," he said, with pallid lips, as he felt all over the bed in frenzied haste, "where in thunder are them infernal bees?"

And a large "bumble," with a sting as pitiless as the finger of scorn, just then climbed up the inside of Mr. Middlerib's nightshirt, until it got squarely between his shoulders, and then it felt for his marrow, and he said calmly:

"Here is one of them."

And Mrs. Middlerib felt ashamed of her feeble

screams when Mr. Middlerib threw up both arms and, with a howl that made the windows rattle, roared:

"Take him off! Oh, land of Scott, somebody take him off!"

And when the little honey-bee began tickling the sole of Mrs. Middlerib's foot, she shrieked that the house was bewitched, and immediately went into spasms.

The household was aroused by this time. Miss Middlerib and Master Middlerib and the servants were pouring into the room, adding to the general confusion by howling at random and asking irrelevant questions, while they gazed at the figure of a man a little on in years arrayed in a long night-shirt, pawing fiercely at the unattainable spot in the middle of his back, while he danced an unnatural, weird, wicked-looking jig by the dim, religious light of the night-lamp. And while he danced and howled, and while they gazed and shouted, a navy-blue wasp, that Master Middlerib had put in the bottle for good measure and variety, and to keep the menagerie stirred up, had dried his legs and wings with a corner of the sheet, and after a preliminary circle or two around the bed to get up his motion and settle down to a working gait, he fired himself across the room, and to his dying day Mr. Middlerib will always believe that one of the servants mistook him for a burglar and shot him.

No one, not even Mr. Middlerib himself,

could doubt that he was, at least for the time, most thoroughly cured of rheumatism. His own boy could not have carried himself more lightly or with greater agility. But the cure was not permanent and Mr. Middlerib does not like to talk about it.—*New York Weekly.*

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

AN APHORISM AND A LECTURE

One of the boys mentioned, the other evening, in the course of a very pleasant poem he read us, a little trick of the Commons table-boarders, which I, nourished at the parental board, had never heard of. Young fellows being always hungry—— Allow me to stop dead short, in order to utter an aphorism which has been forming itself in one of the blank interior spaces of my intelligence, like a crystal in the cavity of a geode.

Aphorism by the Professor

In order to know whether a human being is young or old, offer it food of different kinds at short intervals. If young, it will eat anything at any hour of the day or night. If old, it observes stated periods, and you might as well attempt to regulate the time of high-water to suit a fishing-party as to change these periods.

The crucial experiment is this. Offer a bulky and boggy bun to the suspected individual just ten minutes before dinner. If this is eagerly accepted and devoured, the fact of youth is established. If the subject of the question starts back and expresses surprise

and incredulity, as if you could not possibly be in earnest, the fact of maturity is no less clear.

—Excuse me—I return to my story of the Commons table. Young fellows being always hungry, and tea and dry toast being the meager fare of the evening meal, it was a trick of some of the boys to impale a slice of meat upon a fork at dinner time and stick the fork holding it beneath the table, so that they could get it at tea time. The dragons that guarded this table of the Hesperides found out the trick at last and kept a sharp lookout for missing forks—they knew where to find one if it was not in its place. Now the odd thing was that, after waiting so many years to hear of this college trick, I should hear it mentioned a *second time* within the same twenty-four hours by a college youth of the present generation. Strange, but true. And so it has happened to me and to every person, often and often, to be hit in rapid succession by these twinned facts or thoughts, as if they were linked like chain-shot.

I was going to leave the simple reader to wonder over this, taking it as an unexplained marvel. I think, however, I will turn over a furrow of subsoil in it. The explanation is, of course, that in a great many thoughts there must be a few coincidences, and these instantly arrest our attention. Now we shall probably never have the least idea of the enormous number of impressions which pass through our conscious-

ness, until in some future life we see the photographic record of our thoughts and the stereoscopic picture of our actions. There go more pieces to make up a conscious life or a living body than you think for. Why, some of you were surprised when a friend of mine told you there were fifty-eight separate pieces in a fiddle. How many "swimming glands"—solid, organized, regularly formed, rounded disks, taking an active part in all your vital processes, part and parcel, each one of them, of your corporal being—do you suppose are whirled along like pebbles in a stream with the blood which warms your frame and colors your cheeks? A noted German physiologist spread out a minute drop of blood under the microscope, in narrow streaks, and counted the globules, and then made a calculation. The counting by the micrometer took him a *week*. You have, my full-grown friend, of these little couriers in crimson or scarlet livery, running on your vital errands day and night as long as you live, sixty-five billions five hundred and seventy thousand millions, errors excepted. Did I hear some gentleman say "Doubted"? I am the Professor; I sit in my chair with a petard under it that will blow me through the skylight of my lecture-room if I do not know what I am talking about and whom I am quoting.

Now, my dear friends, who are putting your hands to your foreheads and saying to yourselves that you feel a little confused, as if you

had been waltzing until things began to whirl slightly round you, is it possible that you do not clearly apprehend the exact connection of all that I have been saying and its bearing on what is now to come? Listen, then. The number of these living elements in our body illustrates the incalculable multitude of our thoughts; the number of our thoughts accounts for those frequent coincidences spoken of; these coincidences in the world of thought illustrate those which we constantly observe in the world of outward events, of which the presence of the young girl now at our table, and proving to be the daughter of an old acquaintance some of us may remember, is the special example which led me through this labyrinth of reflections, and finally lands me at the commencement of this young girl's story, which, as I said, I have found the time and felt the interest to learn something of, and which I think I can tell without wronging the unconscious subject of my brief delineation.

A Short Lecture on Phrenology

Read to the Boarders at Our Breakfast Table

I shall begin, my friends, with the definition of a *pseudoscience*. A pseudoscience consists of a *nomenclature*, with a self-adjusting arrangement, by which all positive evidence, or such as favors its doctrines, is admitted, and all negative evidence, or such as tells against it, is excluded. It is invariably connected with

some lucrative practical application. Its professors and practitioners are usually shrewd people; they are very serious with the public, but wink and laugh a good deal among themselves. The believing multitude consists of women of both sexes, feeble-minded inquirers, poetical optimists, people who always get cheated in buying horses, philanthropists who insist on hurrying up the millennium, and others of this class, with here and there a clergyman, less frequently a lawyer, very rarely a physician, and almost never a horse-jockey or a member of the detective police. I did not say that Phrenology was one of the pseudosciences.

A pseudoscience does not necessarily consist wholly of lies. It may contain many truths, and even valuable ones. The rottenest bank starts with a little specie. It puts out a thousand promises to pay on the strength of a single dollar, but the dollar is very commonly a good one. The practitioners of the pseudosciences know that common minds after they have been baited with a real fact or two, will jump at the merest rag of a lie, or even at the bare hook. When we have one fact found us, we are very apt to supply the next out of our own imagination. (How many persons can read Judges xv. 16 correctly the first time?) The pseudosciences take advantage of this. I did not say that it was so with Phrenology.

I have rarely met a sensible man who would

not allow that there was *something* in Phrenology. A broad, high forehead, it is commonly agreed, promises intellect; one that is "villainous low," and has a huge hind-head back of it, is wont to mark an animal nature. I have as rarely met an unbiased and sensible man who really believed in the bumps. It is observed, however, that persons with what the phrenologists call "good heads" are more prone than others toward plenary belief in the doctrine.

It is so hard to prove a negative that, if a man should assert that the moon was in truth a green cheese, formed by the coagulable substance of the Milky Way, and challenge me to prove the contrary, I might be puzzled. But if he offer to sell me a ton of this lunar cheese, I call on him to prove the truth of the caseous nature of our satellite before I purchase.

It is not necessary to prove the falsity of the phrenological statement. It is only necessary to show that its truth is not proved, and cannot be, by the common course of argument. The walls of the head are double, with a great air-chamber between them, over the smallest and most closely crowded "organs." Can you tell how much money there is in a safe, which also has thick double walls, by kneading its knobs with your fingers? So when a man fumbles about my forehead, and talks about the organs of *Individuality*, *Size*, etc., I trust him as much as I should if he felt of the outside of my strong-box and told me that there was a five-dollar or

a ten-dollar bill under this or that particular rivet. Perhaps there is; *only he doesn't know anything about it.* But this is a point that I, the Professor, understand, my friends, or ought to, certainly, better than you do. The next argument you will all appreciate.

I proceed, therefore, to explain the self-adjusting mechanism of Phrenology, which is *very similar* to that of the pseudosciences. An example will show it most conveniently.

A—— is a notorious thief. Messrs. Bumpus and Crane examine him and find a good-sized organ of Acquisitiveness. Positive fact for Phrenology. Casts and drawings of A—— are multiplied, and the bump *does not lose* in the act of copying—I did not say it gained.—What do you look for so? (to the boarders).

Presently B—— turns up, a bigger thief than A——. But B—— has no bump at all over Acquisitiveness. Negative fact; goes against Phrenology. Not a bit of it. Don't you see how small Conscientiousness is? *That's* the reason B—— stole.

And then comes C——, ten times as much a thief as either A—— or B——; used to steal before he was weaned, and would pick one of his own pockets and put its contents in another, if he could find no other way of committing petty larceny. Unfortunately C—— has a *hollow*, instead of a bump, over Acquisitiveness. Ah! but just look and see what a bump of Alimentiveness! Did not

C—— buy nuts and gingerbread, when a boy, with the money he stole? Of course you see why he is a thief, and how his example confirms our noble science.

At last comes along a case which is apparently a *settler*, for there is a little brain with vast and varied powers—a case like that of Byron, for instance. Then comes out the grand reserve-reason which covers everything and renders it simply impossible ever to corner a phrenologist. "It is not the size alone, but the *quality* of an organ, which determines its degree of power."

Oh! oh! I see. The argument may be briefly stated thus by the phrenologist: "Heads I win, tails you lose." Well, that's convenient. It must be confessed that Phrenology has a certain resemblance to the pseudosciences. I did not say it was a pseudoscience.

I have often met persons who have been altogether struck up and amazed at the accuracy with which some wandering Professor of Phrenology had read their characters written upon their skulls. Of course, the Professor acquires his information solely through his cranial inspections and manipulations. What are you laughing at? (to the boarders). But let us just *suppose*, for a moment, that a tolerably cunning fellow, who did not know or care anything about Phrenology, should open a shop and undertake to read off people's characters at fifty cents or a dollar apiece. Let us see how well he could get along without the "organs."

I will suppose myself to set up such a shop. I would invest one hundred dollars, more or less, in casts of brains, skulls, charts, and other matters that would make the most show for the money. That would do to begin with. I would then advertise myself as the celebrated Professor Brainey, or whateve rname I might choose, and wait for my first customer—a middle-aged man. I look at him, ask him a question or two, so as to hear him talk. When I have got the hang of him, I ask him to sit down, and proceed to fumble his skull, dictating as follows:

SCALE FROM 1 TO 10

List of Faculties for Customer	Private Notes for My Pupil! *Each to be accompanied with a wink.*
Amativeness, 7	Most men love the conflicting sex, and all men love to be told they do.
Alimentiveness, 8	Don't you see that he has burst off his lowest waistcoat button with feeding—hey?
Acquisitiveness, 8	Of course. A middle-aged Yankee.
Approbativeness, 7+	Hat well brushed. Hair ditto. Mark the effect of that *plus* sign.
Self-esteem, 6	His face shows that.
Benevolence, 9	That'll please him.
Conscientiousness, 8½	That fraction looks first rate.
Mirthfulness, 7	Has laughed twice since he came in.
Ideality, 9	That sounds well.
Form, Size, Weight, Color, Locality, Eventuality, etc., etc.	4 to 6. Average everything that can't be guessed.

And so of other faculties

Of course, you know, that isn't the way the phrenologists do. They go only by the bumps. What do you keep laughing so for (to the boarders)? I only said that is the way *I* should practise "Phrenology" for a living.

SEBA SMITH

MY FIRST VISIT TO PORTLAND

In the fall of the year 1829 I took it into my head I'd go to Portland. I had heard a good deal about Portland, what a fine place it was, and how the folks got rich there proper fast; and that fall there was a couple of new papers come up to our place from there, called the *Portland Courier* and *Family Reader*, and they told a good many queer kind of things about Portland, and one thing and another; and all at once it popped into my head, and I up and told father, and says:

"I'm going to Portland, whether or no; and I'll see what this world is made of yet."

Father stared a little at first and said he was afraid I would get lost; but when he see I was bent upon it, he give it up, and he stepped to his chist, and opened the till, and took out a dollar and gave it to me; and says he:

"Jack, this is all I can do for you; but go and lead an honest life, and I believe I shall hear good of you yet."

He turned and walked across the room, but I could see the tears start into his eyes. And mother sat down and had a hearty crying spell.

This made me feel rather bad for a minit or two, and I almost had a mind to give it up; and

then again father's dream came into my mind, and I mustered up courage and declared I'd go. So I tackled up the old horse, and packed in a load of ax-handles and a few notions; and mother fried me some doughnuts and put 'em into a box, along with some cheese and sausages and ropped me up another shirt, for I told her I didn't know how long I should be gone. After I got rigged out, I went round and bid all the neighbors good-by and jumped in and drove off for Portland.

Aunt Sally had been married two or three years before and moved to Portland; and I inquired round till I found out where she lived and went there and put the old horse up, and ate some supper and went to bed.

And the next morning I got up and straightened right off to see the editor of the *Portland Courier*, for I knew by what I had seen in his paper that he was just the man to tell me which way to steer. And when I come to see him, I knew I was right; for soon as I told him my name and what I wanted, he took me by the hand as kind as if he had been a brother, and says he:

"Mister," says he, "I'll do anything I can to assist you. You have come to a good town. Portland is a healthy, thriving place, and any man with a proper degree of enterprise may do well here. But," says he, "stranger," and he looked mighty kind of knowing, says he, "if you want to make out to your mind, you must do as the steamboats do."

"Well," says I, "how do they do?" for I didn't know what a steamboat was any more than the man in the moon.

"Why," says he, "they go ahead. And you must drive about among the folks here just as tho' you were at home on the farm among the cattle. Don't be afraid of any of them, but figure away, and I dare say you'll get into good business in a very little while. But," says he, "there's one thing you must be careful of, and that is, not to get into the hands of those are folks that trades up round Hucklers' Row, for there's some sharpers up there, if they get hold of you, would twist your eye-teeth out in five minits."

Well, arter he had giv me all the good advice he could, I went back to Aunt Sally's agin and got some breakfast; and then I walked all over the town, to see what chance I could find to sell my ax-handles and things and to git into business.

After I had walked about three or four hours, I come along toward the upper end of the town, where I found there were stores and shops of all sorts and sizes. And I met a feller, and says I:

"What place is this?"

"Why, this," says he, "is Hucklers' Row."

"What," says I, "are these the stores where the traders in Hucklers' Row keep?"

And says he, "Yes."

Well, then, says I to myself, I have a pesky

good mind to go in and have a try with one of these chaps and see if they can twist my eye-teeth out. If they can get the best end of the bargain out of me they can do what there ain't a man in our place can do; and I should just like to know what sort of stuff these ere Portland chaps are made of. So in I goes into the best-looking store among 'em. And I see some biscuit lying on the shelf, and says I:

"Mister, how much do you ax apiece for them ere biscuits?"

"A cent apiece," says he.

"Well," says I, "I shan't give you that, but if you've a mind to, I'll give you two cents for three of them, for I begin to feel a little as tho' I would like to take a bite."

"Well," says he, "I wouldn't sell 'em to anybody else so, but seeing it's you I don't care if you take 'em."

I knew he lied, for he never seen me before in his life. Well, he handed down the biscuits, and I took 'em, and walked round the store awhile, to see what else he had to sell. At last says I:

"Mister, have you got any good cider?"

Says he, "Yes, as good as ever you see."

"Well," says I, "what do you ax a glass for it?"

"Two cents," says he.

"Well," says I, "seems to me I feel more dry than I do hungry now. Ain't you a mind to take these ere biscuits again and give me a glass of cider?" and says he:

"I don't care if I do."

So he took and laid 'em on the shelf again and poured out a glass of cider. I took the glass of cider and drinkt it down, and, to tell you the truth about it, it was capital good cider. Then says I:

"I guess it's about time for me to be a-going," and so I stept along toward the door; but he ups and says, says he:

"Stop, mister, I believe you haven't paid me for the cider."

"Not paid you for the cider!" says I; "what do you mean by that? Didn't the biscuits that I give you just come to the cider?"

"Oh, ah, right!" says he.

So I started to go again, but before I had reached the door he says, says he:

"But stop, mister, you didn't pay me for the biscuits."

"What!" says I, "do you mean to impose upon me? Do you think I am going to pay you for the biscuits, and let you keep them, too? Ain't they there now on your shelf? What more do you want? I guess, sir, you don't whittle me in that way."

So I turned about and marched off and left the feller staring and scratching his head as tho' he was struck with a dunderment.

Howsomever, I didn't want to cheat him, only jest to show 'em it wasn't so easy a matter to pull my eye-teeth out; so I called in next day and paid him two cents.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

THE MOSQUITO

FAIR insect! that with threadlike legs spread out
And blood-extracting bill and filmy wing,
Dost murmur, as thou slowly sail'st about,
In pitiless ears, full many a plaintive thing,
And tell how little our large veins should bleed,
Would we but yield them to thy bitter need?

Unwillingly I own, and, what is worse,
Full angrily men hearken to thy plaint;
Thou gettest many a brush and many a curse,
For saying thou art gaunt and starved and faint.
Even the old beggar, while he asks for food,
Would kill thee, hapless stranger, if he could.

I call thee stranger, for the town, I ween,
Has not the honor of so proud a birth—
Thou com'st from Jersey meadows, fresh and green,
The offspring of the gods, though born on earth;
For Titan was thy sire, and fair was she,
The ocean nymph that nursed thy infancy.

Beneath the rushes was thy cradle swung,
And when at length thy gauzy wings grew strong,

Abroad to gentle airs their folds were flung,
Rose in the sky, and bore thee soft along;
The south wind breathed to waft thee on thy way,
And danced and shone beneath the billowy bay.

Calm rose afar the city spires, and thence
Came the deep murmur of its throng of men,
And as its grateful odors met thy sense,
They seemed the perfumes of thy native fen.
Fair lay its crowded streets, and at the sight
Thy tiny song grew shriller with delight.

At length thy pinion fluttered in Broadway—
Ah, there were fairy steps, and white necks kissed
By wanton airs, and eyes whose killing ray
Shone through the snowy veils like stars through mist;
And fresh as morn, on many a cheek and chin,
Bloomed the bright blood through the transparent skin.

Sure these were sights to tempt an anchorite!
What! do I hear thy slender voice complain?
Thou wailest when I talk of beauty's light,
As if it brought the memory of pain.
Thou art a wayward being—well—come near,
And pour thy tale of sorrow in mine ear.

What say'st thou, slanderer! rouge makes thee sick?
And China Bloom at best is sorry food?

And Rowland's Kalydor, if laid on thick,
Poisons the thirsty wretch that bores for blood.
Go! 'Twas a just reward that met thy crime—
But shun the sacrilege another time.

That bloom was made to look at—not to touch;
To worship — not approach — that radiant white;
And well might sudden vengeance light on such
As dared, like thee, most impiously to bite.
Thou shouldst have gazed at distance and admired—
Murmur'd thy admiration and retired.

Thou'rt welcome to the town—but why come here
To bleed a brother poet, gaunt like thee?
Alas! the little blood I have is dear,
And thin will be the banquet drawn from me.
Look round—the pale-eyed sisters in my cell,
Thy old acquaintance, Song and Famine, dwell.

Try some plump alderman, and suck the blood
Enrich'd by gen'rous wine and costly meat;
On well-filled skins, sleek as thy native mud,
Fix thy light pump, and press thy freckled feet.
Go to the men for whom in ocean's halls,
The oyster breeds and the green turtle sprawls.

There corks are drawn, and the red vintage flows
To fill the swelling veins for thee, and now
The ruddy cheek, and now the ruddier nose
Shall tempt thee, as thou flittest round the brow;
And when the hour of sleep its quiet brings,
No angry hand shall rise to brush thy wings.

DANFORTH MARBLE

THE HOOSIER AND THE SALT-PILE

"I'm sorry," says Dan, as he knocked the ashes from his regalia, as he sat in a small crowd over a glass of sherry at Florence's, New York, one evening. "I'm sorry that the stages are disappearing so rapidly; I never enjoyed traveling so well as in the slow coaches. I've made a good many passages over the Alleghanies, and across Ohio, from Cleveland to Columbus and Cincinnati, all over the South, down East, and up North, in stages, and I generally had a good time.

"When I passed over from Cleveland to Cincinnati, the last time, in a stage, I met a queer crowd—such a *corps*, such a time you never did see; I never was better amused in my life. We had a good team—spanking horses, fine coaches, and one of them *drivers* you read of. Well, there was nine 'insiders,' and I don't believe there ever was a stageful of Christians ever started before so chuck full of music.

"There was a beautiful young lady going to one of the Cincinnati academies; next to her sat a Jew peddler—for Cowes and a market; wedging him in was a dandy blackleg, with jewelry and chains around his breast and neck—

enough to hang him. There was myself and an old gentleman with large spectacles, gold-headed cane, and a jolly, soldiering-iron-looking nose; by him was a circus rider whose breath was enough to breed yaller fever and could be felt just as easy as cotton velvet! A cross old woman came next, and whose *look* would have given any reasonable man the double-breasted blues before breakfast; alongside of her was a rale backwoods preacher, with the biggest and ugliest mouth ever got up since the flood. He was flanked by the low comedian of the party, an Indiana Hoosier, 'gwine down to Orleans to get an army contract' to supply the forces then in Mexico with beef.

"We rolled along for some time; nobody seemed inclined to 'open.' The old aunty sot bolt upright, looking crab-apples and persimmons at the Hoosier and the preacher; the young lady dropped the green curtain of her bonnet over her pretty face, and leaned back in her seat, to nod and dream over japonicas and jumbles, pantalettes and poetry; the old gentleman, proprietor of the Bardolph 'nose,' looked out at the 'corduroy' and swashes; the gambler fell off into a doze, and the circus covey followed suit, leaving the preacher and me *vis-à-vis* and saying nothing to nobody. 'Indiany,' he stuck his mug out at the window and criticized the cattle we now and then passed. I was wishing somebody would give the conversation a start, when 'Indiany' made a break:

'This ain't no great stock country,' says he to the old gentleman with the cane.

"'No, sir,' was the reply. 'There's very little grazing here; the range is nearly wore out.'

"Then there was nothing said again for some time. Bimeby the Hoosier opened again:

"'It's the d——est place for 'simmon trees and turkey buzzards I ever did see!'

"The old gentleman with the cane didn't say nothing, and the preacher gave a long groan. The young lady smiled through her veil, and the old lady snapped her eyes and looked sideways at the speaker.

"'Don't make much beef here, I reckon,' says the Hoosier.

"'No,' says the gentleman.

"'Well, I don't see how in h—ll they all manage to get along in a country whar thar ain't no ranges and they don't make no beef. A man ain't considered worth a cuss in Indiany what hasn't got his brand on a hundred head.'

"'Yours is a great beef country, I believe,' says the old gentleman.

"'Well, sir, it ain't anything else. A man that's got sense enuff to foller his own cow-bell with us ain't in no danger of starvin'. I'm gwine down to Orleans to see if I can't git a contract out of Uncle Sam to feed the boys what's been lickin' them infernal Mexicans so bad. I s'pose you've seed them cussed lies what's been in the papers about the Indiany boys at Bony Visty.'

"'I've read some accounts of the battle,' says the old gentleman, 'that didn't give a very flattering account of the conduct of some of our troops.'

"With that the Indiany man went into a full explanation of the affair, and, gittin' warmed up as he went along, begun to cuss and swear like he'd been through a dozen campaigns himself. The old preacher listened to him with evident signs of displeasure, twistin' and groanin' till he couldn't stand it no longer.

"'My friend,' says he, 'you must excuse me, but your conversation would be a great deal more interesting to me—and I'm sure would please the company much better—if you wouldn't swear so terribly. It's very wrong to swear and I hope you'll have respect for our feelin's if you hain't no respect for your Maker.'

"If the Hoosier had been struck with thunder and lightnin' he couldn't have been more completely tuck a-back. He shut his mouth right in the middle of what he was sayin' and looked at the preacher, while his face got as red as fire.

"'Swearin',' says the preacher, 'is a terrible bad practice, and there ain't no use in it nohow. The Bible says, "swear not at all," and I s'pose you know the Commandments about swearin'?'

"The old lady sort of brightened up—the preacher was her 'duck of a man'; the old fellow with the 'nose' and cane let off a few 'umph, ah! umphs.' But 'Indiany' kept shady; he appeared to be *cowed* down.

"'I know,' says the preacher, 'that a great many people swear without thinkin', and some people don't believe the Bible.'

"And then he went on to preach a regular sermon agin swearing, and to quote Scripture like he had the whole Bible by heart. In the course of his argument he undertook to prove the Scriptures to be true, and told us all about the miracles and prophecies, and their fulfilment. The old gentleman with the cane took a part in the conversation, and the Hoosier listened without ever opening his head.

"'I've just heard of a gentleman,' says the preacher, 'that's been to the Holy Land and went over the Bible country. It's astonishin' to hear what wonderful things he has seen. He was at Sodom and Gomorrow, and seen the place whar Lot's wife fell!'

"'Ah,' says the old gentleman with the cane.

"'Yes,' says the preacher, 'he went to the very spot; and what's the remarkablest thing of all, he seen the pillar of salt what she was turned into!'

"'Is it possible!' says the old gentleman.

"'Yes, sir; he seen the salt, standin' thar to this day.'

"'What!' says the Hoosier, 'real genewine, good salt?'

"'Yes, sir; a pillar of salt, jest as it was when that wicked woman was punished for her disobedience.'

"All but the gambler, who was snoozing in the

corner of the coach, looked at the preacher—the Hoosier with an expression of countenance that plainly told that his mind was powerfully convicted of an important fact.

"'Right out in the open air?' he asked.

"'Yes, standin' right in the open field, whar she fell.'

"'Well, sir,' says 'Indiany,' 'all I've got to say is, *if she'd dropped in our parts, the cattle would have licked her up afore sundown!*"

"The preacher raised both his hands at such an irreverent remark, and the old gentleman laughed himself into a fit of asthmatics; what he didn't get over till he came to the next change of horses. The Hoosier had played the mischief with the gravity of the whole party; even the old maid had to put her handkerchief to her face, and the young lady's eyes were filled with tears for half an hour afterward. The old preacher hadn't another word to say on the subject; but whenever we came to any place or met anybody on the road, the circus man nursed the thing along by asking what was the price of salt."

CHARLES F. BROWNE
("Artemus Ward")

ONE OF MR. WARD'S BUSINESS LETTERS

To the Editor of the ——

Sir: I'm movin along—slowly along—down tords your place. I want you should rite me a letter, saying how is the show bizness in your place. My show at present consists of three moral Bares, a Kangaroo (a amoozin little Raskal—'twould make you larf yourself to deth to see the little cuss jump up and squeal), wax figgers of G. Washington, Gen. Tayler, John Bunyan, Capt. Kidd, and Dr. Webster in the act of killin Dr. Parkman, besides several miscellanyus moral wax statoots of celebrated piruts & murderers, &c., ekalled by few & exceld by none. Now, Mr. Editor, scratch orf a few lines sayin how is the show bizniss down to your place. I shall hav my hanbills dun at your offiss. Depend upon it. I want you should git my hanbills up in flamin stile. Also git up a tremenjus excitemunt in yr. paper 'bowt my onparaleled Show. We must fetch the public sumhow. We must wurk on their feelins. Cum the moral on em strong. If it's a temperance community, tell em I sined the pledge fifteen minits arter Ise born, but on the

contery, ef your peple take their tods, say Mister Ward is as Jenial a feller as ever we met. full of conwiviality, & the life an sole of the Soshul Bored. Take, don't you? If you say anythin abowt my show, say my snaiks is as harmliss as the new born Babe. What a interistin study it is to see a zewological animil like a snake under perfect subjecshun! My kangaroo is the most larfable little cuss I ever saw. All for 15 cents. I am anxyus to skewer your inflooence. I repeet in regard to them hanbills that I shall git 'em struck orf up to your printin office. My perlitical sentiments agree with yourn exactly. I know they do, becaws I never saw a man whoos didn't.

Respectively yures, A. Ward.

P. S.—You scratch my back & Ile scratch your back.

ON "FORTS"

Every man has got a Fort. It's sum men's fort to do one thing, and some other men's fort to do another, while there is numeris shiftliss critters goin' round loose whose fort is not to do nothin'.

Shakspeer rote good plase, but he wouldn't hav succeeded as a Washington correspondent of a New York daily paper. He lackt the rekesit fancy and immagginashun.

That's so!

Old George Washington's Fort was not to hev

eny public man of the present day resemble him to eny alarmin extent. Whare bowts can George's ekal be found? I ask, & boldly answer no whares, or any whare else.

Old man Townsin's Fort was to maik Sassyperiller. "Goy to the world! anuther life saived!" (Cotashun from Townsin's advertisement.)

Cyrus Field's Fort is to lay a sub-machine tellegraf under the boundin billers of the Oshun and then have it Bust.

Spaldin's Fort is to maik Prepared Gloo, which mends everything. Wonder ef it will mend a sinner's wickid waze. (Impromptoo goak.)

Zoary's Fort is to be a femaile circus feller.

My Fort is the grate moral show bizniss & ritin choice famerly literatoor for the noospapers. That's what's the matter with *me*.

&., &., &. So I mite go on to a indefnit extent.

Twict I've endevered to do things which thay wasn't my Fort. The fust time was when I undertuk to lick a owdashus cuss who cut a hole in my tent & krawld threw. Sez I, "My jentle Sir, go out or I shall fall on to you putty hevy." Sez he, "Wade in, Old wax figgers," whereupon I went for him, but he cawt me powerful on the hed & knockt me threw the tent into a cow pastur. He pursood the attack & flung me into a mud puddle. As I arose & rung out my drencht garmints I koncluded fitin wasn't my Fort. He now rize the kurtin upon

On "Forts"

Seen 2nd: It is rarely seldum that I seek consolation in the Flowin Bole. But in a certain town in Injianny in the Faul of 18—, my orgin grinder got sick with the fever & died. I never felt so ashamed in my life, & I thowt I'd hist in a few swallers of suthin strengthnin. Konsequents was I histid in so much I didn't zackly know whare bowts I was. I turned my livin wild beasts of Pray loose into the streets and spilt all my wax wurks. I then bet I cood play hoss. So I hitched myself to a Kanawl bote, there bein two other hosses hicht on also, one behind and another ahead of me. The driver hollerd for us to git up, and we did. But the hosses bein onused to sich a arrangemunt begun to kick & squeal and rair up. Konsequents was I was kickt vilently in the stummuck & back, and presuntly I fownd myself in the Kanawl with the other hosses, kickin & yellin like a tribe of Cusscaroorus savvijis. I was rescood & as I was bein carrid to the tavern on a hemlock Bored I sed in a feeble voise, "Boys, playin hoss isn't my Fort."

Morul.—Never don't do nothin which isn't your Fort, for ef you do you'll find yourself splashin round in the Kanawl, figgeratively speakin.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

WITHOUT AND WITHIN

My coachman, in the moonlight there,
  Looks through the sidelight of the door;
I hear him with his brethren swear,
  As I could do—but only more.

Flattening his nose against the pane,
  He envies me my brilliant lot,
Breathes on his aching fist in vain,
  And dooms me to a place more hot.

He sees me into supper go,
  A silken wonder at my side,
Bare arms, bare shoulders, and a row
  Of flounces, for the door too wide.

He thinks how happy is my arm,
  'Neath its white-gloved and jeweled load;
And wishes me some dreadful harm,
  Hearing the merry corks explode.

Meanwhile I inly curse the bore
  Of hunting still the same old coon,
And envy him, outside the door,
  The golden quiet of the moon.

Without and Within

The winter wind is not so cold
As the bright smile he sees me win,
Nor the host's oldest wine so old
As our poor gabble, sour and thin.

I envy him the rugged prance
By which his freezing feet he warms,
And drag my lady's chains and dance,
The galley-slave of dreary forms.

Oh, could he have my share of din,
And I his quiet—past a doubt
'Twould still be one man bored within,
And just another bored without.

LOUISA MAY ALCOTT

STREET SCENES IN WASHINGTON

The mules were my especial delight; and an hour's study of a constant succession of them introduced me to many of their characteristics: for six of these odd little beasts drew each army wagon and went hopping like frogs through the stream of mud that gently rolled along the street. The coquettish mule had small feet, a nicely trimmed tassel of a tail, perked-up ears, and seemed much given to little tosses of the head, affected skips and prances; and, if he wore the bells or were bedizened with a bit of finery, put on as many airs as any belle. The moral mule was a stout, hard-working creature, always tugging with all his might, often pulling away after the rest had stopped, laboring under the conscientious delusion that food for the entire army depended upon his private exertions. I respected this style of mule; and, had I possessed a juicy cabbage, would have pressed it upon him with thanks for his excellent example. The histrionic mule was a melodramatic quadruped, prone to startling humanity by erractic leaps and wild plunges, much shaking of his stubborn head, and lashing out of his vicious heels; now and then falling flat and apparently dying à la

Forrest; a gasp—a squirm—a flop, and so on, till the street was well blocked up, the drivers all swearing like demons in bad hats, and the chief actor's circulation decidedly quickened by every variety of kick, cuff, jerk and haul. When the last breath seemed to have left his body, and "doctors were in vain," a sudden resurrection took place; and if ever a mule laughed with scornful triumph, that was the beast, as he leisurely rose, gave a comfortable shake, and, calmly regarding the excited crowd, seemed to say—"A hit! a decided hit! for the stupidest of animals has bamboozled a dozen men. Now, then! what are *you* stopping the way for?" The pathetic mule was, perhaps, the most interesting of all; for, though he always seemed to be the smallest, thinnest, weakest of the six, the postillion with big boots, long-tailed coat and heavy whip was sure to bestride this one, who struggled feebly along, head down, coat muddy and rough, eye spiritless and sad, his very tail a mortified stump, and the whole beast a picture of meek misery, fit to touch a heart of stone. The jovial mule was a roly-poly, happy-go-lucky little piece of horseflesh, taking everything easily, from cudgeling to caressing; strolling along with a roguish twinkle of the eye, and, if the thing were possible, would have had his hands in his pockets and whistled as he went. If there ever chanced to be an apple core, a stray turnip or wisp of hay in the gutter, this Mark Tapley was sure to find it, and

none of his mates seemed to begrudge him his bite. I suspected this fellow was the peace-maker, confidant and friend of all the others, for he had a sort of "Cheer-up-old-boy-I'll-pull-you-through" look which was exceedingly engaging.

Pigs also possessed attractions for me, never having had an opportunity of observing their graces of mind and manner till I came to Washington, whose porcine citizens appeared to enjoy a larger liberty than many of its human ones. Stout, sedate-looking pigs hurried by each morning to their places of business, with a preoccupied air, and sonorous greetings to their friends. Genteel pigs, with an extra curl to their tails, promenaded in pairs, lunching here and there, like gentlemen of leisure. Rowdy pigs pushed the passersby off the sidewalk; tipsy pigs hiccoughed their version of "We won't go home till morning" from the gutter; and delicate young pigs tripped daintily through the mud as if they plumed themselves upon their ankles, and kept themselves particularly neat in point of stockings. Maternal pigs, with their interesting families, strolled by in the sun; and often the pink, babylike squealers lay down for a nap, with a trust in Providence worthy of human imitation.—*Hospital Sketches.*

MIS' SMITH

All day she hurried to get through,
The same as lots of wimmin do;
Sometimes at night her husban' said,
"Ma, ain't you goin' to come to bed?
And then she'd kinder give a hitch,
And pause half way between a stitch,
And sorter sigh, and say that she
Was ready as she'd ever be,
She reckoned.

And so the years went one by one,
An' somehow she was never done;
An' when the angel said, as how
"Miss Smith, it's time you rested now,"
She sorter raised her eyes to look
A second, as a stitch she took;
"All right, I'm comin' now," says she,
"I'm ready as I'll ever be,
I reckon."

Albert Bigelow Paine.

A BOSTON LULLABY

Baby's brain is tired of thinking
On the Wherefore and the Whence;
Baby's precious eyes are blinking
With incipient somnolence.

Little hands are weary turning
Heavy leaves of lexicon;
Little nose is fretted learning
How to keep its glasses on.

Baby knows the laws of nature
Are beneficent and wise;
His medulla oblongata
Bids my darling close his eyes

And his pneumogastrics tell him
Quietude is always best
When his little cerebellum
Needs recuperative rest.

Baby must have relaxation,
Let the world go wrong or right—
Sleep, my darling, leave Creation
To its chances for the night.

James Jeffrey Roche

IRISH ASTRONOMY

O'Ryan was a man of might
  Whin Ireland was a nation,
But poachin' was his heart's delight
  And constant occupation.
He had an ould militia gun,
  And sartin sure his aim was;
He gave the keepers many a run,
  And wouldn't mind the game laws

St. Pathrick wanst was passin' by
  O'Ryan's little houldin',
And, as the saint felt wake and dhry
  He thought he'd enther bould in.
"O'Ryan," says the saint, "avick!
  To praich at Thurles I'm goin';
So let me have a rasher quick,
  And a dhrop of Innishowen."

"No rasher will I cook for you
  While betther is to spare, sir,
But here's a jug of mountain dew,
  And there's a rattlin' hare, sir."
St. Pathrick he looked mighty sweet,
  And says he, "Good luck attind you,
And whin you're in your windin' sheet,
  It's up to heaven I'll sind you."

O'Ryan gave his pipe a whiff—
"Them tidin's is thransportin',
But may I ax your saintship if
There's any kind of sportin'?"
St. Pathrick said, "A Lion's there,
Two Bears, a Bull, and Cancer"—
"Bedad," says Mick, "the huntin's rare;
St. Pathrick, I'm your man, sir."

So, to conclude my song aright,
For fear I'd tire your patience
You'll see O'Ryan any night,
Amid the constellations.
And Venus follows in his track
Till Mars grows jealous raally,
But, faith, he fears the Irish knack
Of handling the shillaly.

CHARLES GRAHAM HALPINE.

BESSIE BROWN, M.D.

'Twas April when she came to town;
The birds had come, the bees were swarming.
Her name, she said, was Doctor Brown:
I saw at once that she was charming.
She took a cottage tinted green,
Where dewy roses loved to mingle;
And on the door, next day, was seen
A dainty little shingle.

Her hair was like an amber wreath;
Her hat was darker, to enhance it.
The violet eyes that glowed beneath
Were brighter than her keenest lancet.
The beauties of her glove and gown
The sweetest rhyme would fail to utter.
Ere she had been a day in town
The town was in a flutter.

The gallants viewed her feet and hands,
And swore they never saw such wee things;
The gossips met in purring bands
And tore her piecemeal o'er the tea things.
The former drank the Doctor's health
With clinking cups, the gay carousers;
The latter watched her door by stealth,
Just like so many mousers.

But Doctor Bessie went her way
  Unmindful of the spiteful cronies,
And drove her buggy every day
  Behind a dashing pair of ponies.
Her flower-like face so bright she bore
  I hoped that time might never wilt her.
The way she tripped across the floor
  Was better than a philter.

Her patients thronged the village street;
  Her snowy slate was always quite full.
Some said her bitters tasted sweet,
  And some pronounced her pills delightful.
'Twas strange—I knew not what it meant—
  She seemed a nymph from Eldorado;
Where'er she came, where'er she went,
  Grief lost its gloomy shadow.

Like all the rest, I, too, grew ill;
  My aching heart there was no quelling.
I tremble at my Doctor's bill—
  And lo! the items still are swelling.
The drugs I've drunk you'd weep to hear!
  They've quite enriched the fair concocter,
And I'm a ruined man, I fear,
  Unless—I wed the Doctor!

SAMUEL MINTURN PECK.

THE TROUT, THE CAT AND THE FOX

A FABLE

(ANONYMOUS)

A FINE full-grown Trout for had some time kept his station in a clear stream, when, one morning, a Cat, extravagantly fond, as cats are wont to be, of fish, caught a glimpse of him, as he glided from beneath an overhanging part of the bank, toward the middle of the river; and with this glimpse, she resolved to spare no pains to capture him. As she sat on the bank waiting for the return of the fish, and laying a plan for her enterprise, a Fox came up, and saluting her, said:

"Your servant, Mrs. Puss. A pleasant place this for taking the morning air; and a notable place for fish, eh!"

"Good morning, Mr. Reynard," replied the Cat. "The place is, as you say, pleasant enough. As for fish, you can judge for yourself whether there are any in this part of the river. I do not deny that near the falls, about four miles from here, some very fine salmon and other fish are to be found."

At this very moment, very inappositely for the Cat's hint, the Trout made his appearance; and the Fox looking significantly at her, said:

"The falls, madam! Perhaps this fine Trout is

on his way thither. It may be that you would like the walk; allow me the pleasure of accompanying you?"

"I thank you, sir," replied the Cat, "but I am not disposed to walk so far at present. Indeed, I hardly know whether I am quite well. I think I will rest myself a little, and then return home."

"Whatever you may determine," rejoined the Fox, "I hope to be permitted to enjoy your society and conversation; and possibly I may have the great gratification of preventing the tedium which, were you left alone, your indisposition might produce."

In speaking thus, the crafty Fox had no doubt that the only indisposition from which the Cat was suffering was an unwillingness to allow him a share of her booty; and he was determined that, so far as management could go, she should catch no fish that day without his being a party to the transaction. As the trout still continued in sight, be began to commend his shape and color; and the Cat, seeing no way of getting rid of him, finally agreed that they should jointly try their skill and divide the spoil. Upon this compact, they both went actively to work.

They agreed first to try the following device: A small knob of earth covered with rushes stood in the water close to the bank. Both the fishers were to crouch behind these rushes; the Fox was to move the water very gently with the end of

his long brush, and withdraw it so soon as the Trout's attention should have been drawn to that point; and the Cat was to hold her right paw underneath, and be ready, so soon as the fish should come over it, to throw him out on the bank. No sooner was the execution of this device commenced than it seemed likely to succeed. The Trout soon noticed the movement on the water, and glided quickly toward the point where it was made; but when he had arrived within about twice his own length of it, he stopped and then backed toward the middle of the river. Several times this maneuver was repeated, and always with the same result, until the tricky pair were convinced that they must try some other scheme.

It so happened that whilst they were considering what they should do next, the Fox espied a small piece of meat, when it was agreed that he should tear this into little bits and throw them into the stream above where they then were; that the Cat should wait, crouched behind a tuft of grass, to dash into the river and seize the Trout, if he should come to take any piece of meat floating near the bank; and that the Fox should, on the first movement of the Cat, return and give his help. This scheme was put into practice, but with no better success than the other. The Trout came and took the pieces of meat which had floated farthest off from the bank, but to those which floated near he seemed to pay no attention. As he rose to take the

last, he put his mouth out of the water and said, "To other travelers with these petty tricks: here we are 'wide awake as a black fish' and are not to be caught with bits and scraps, like so many silly gudgeons!"

As the Trout went down the Fox said, in an undertone: "Say you so, my fine fellow; we may, perhaps, make a *gudgeon* of you yet!"

Then, turning to the Cat, he proposed to her a new scheme in the following terms:

"I have a scheme to propose which cannot, I am persuaded, fail of succeeding, if you will lend your talent and skill for the execution of it. As I crossed the bridge, a little way above, I saw the dead body of a small dog, and near it a flat piece of wood rather longer than your person. Now, let us throw the dead dog into the river and give the Trout time to examine it; then, let us put the piece of wood into the water, and do you set yourself upon it so that it shall be lengthwise under you, and your mouth may lean over one edge and your tail hang in the water as if you were dead. The Trout, no doubt, will come up to you, when you may seize him and paddle to the bank with him, where I will be in waiting to help you land the prey."

The scheme pleased the Cat so much that, in spite of her repugnance to the wetting, which it promised her, she resolved to act the part which the cunning Fox had assigned to her. They first threw the dead dog into the river and, going down the stream, they soon had the satis-

faction of seeing the Trout glide up close to it and examine it. They then returned to the bridge and put the piece of wood into the water, and the Cat, having placed herself upon it and taken a posture as if she were dead, was soon carried down by the current to where the Trout was. Apparently without the least suspicion, he came up close to the Cat's head, and she, seizing him by one of his gills, held him in spite of all his struggles. The task of regaining the bank still had to be performed, and this was no small difficulty, for the Trout struggled so hard, and the business of navigation was so new to the Cat, that not without great labor and fatigue did she reach the place where the Fox was waiting for her. As one end of the board struck the bank, the Fox put his right forepaw upon it, then seizing the fish near the tail, as the Cat let it go, he gave the board a violent push which sent it toward the middle of the stream, and instantly ran off with the Trout in his mouth toward the bridge.

It had so happened that after the Fox had quitted the bridge the last time, an Otter had come there to watch for fish, and he, seeing the Trout in the Fox's mouth, rushed toward him, and compelled him to drop the fish and put himself on the defensive. It had also happened that this Otter had been seen in an earlier part of the day, and that notice of him had been given to the farmer to whom the Cat belonged, and who had more than once declared that if ever he

found her fishing again she should be thrown into the river with a stone tied to her neck. The moment the farmer heard of the Otter, he took his gun, and followed by a laborer and two strong dogs, went toward the river, where he arrived just as the Cat, exhausted by the fatigue of her second voyage, was crawling up the bank. Immediately he ordered the laborer to put the sentence of drowning in execution; then, followed by his dogs, he arrived near the bridge just as the Fox and the Otter were about to join battle. Instantly the dogs set on the Fox and tore him to pieces; and the farmer, shooting the Otter dead on the spot, possessed himself of the Trout, which had thus served to detain first one, then the other of his destroyers, till a severe punishment had overtaken each of them.

Moral.—The inexperienced are never so much in danger of being deceived and hurt as when they think themselves a match for the crafty, and suppose that they have penetrated their designs and seen through all their stratagems. As to the crafty, they are ever in danger, either by being overreached one by another or of falling in a hurry into some snare of their own, where, as commonly happens, should they be caught, they are treated with a full measure of severity. —*Æsop, Jr., in America.*

THE BRITISH MATRON

(Anonymous)

I have heard a good deal of the tenacity with which English ladies retain their personal beauty to a late period of life; but (not to suggest that an American eye needs use and cultivation before it can quite appreciate the charm of English beauty at any age) it strikes me that an English lady of fifty is apt to become a creature less refined and delicate, so far as her physique goes, than anything that we Western people class under the name of woman. She has an awful ponderosity of frame—not pulpy, like the looser development of our few fat women, but massive, with solid beef and streaky tallow; so that (though struggling manfully against the ideal) you inevitably think of her as made up of steaks and sirloins. When she walks her advance is elephantine. When she sits down it is on a great round space of her Maker's footstool, where she looks as if nothing could ever move her. She imposes awe and respect by the muchness of her personality, to such a degree that you probably credit her with far greater moral and intellectual force than she can fairly claim. Her visage is usually grim and stern, seldom positively forbidding, yet

calmly terrible, not merely by its breadth and weight of feature, but because it seems to express so much well-defined self-reliance, such acquaintance with the world, its toils, troubles and dangers, and such sturdy capacity for trampling down a foe. Without anything positively salient, or actively offensive, or, indeed, unjustly formidable to her neighbors, she has the effect of a seventy-four-gun ship in time of peace; for, while you assure yourself that there is no real danger, you cannot help thinking how tremendous would be her onset if pugnaciously inclined, and how futile the effort to inflict any counter-injury. She certainly looks tenfold —nay, a hundredfold—better able to take care of herself than our slender-framed and haggard womankind; but I have not found reason to suppose that the English dowager of fifty has actually greater courage, fortitude and strength of character than our women of similar age, or even a tougher physical endurance than they. Morally, she is strong, I suspect, only in society and in common routine of social affairs, and would be found powerless and timid in any exceptional strait that might call for energy outside of the conventionalities amid which she has grown up.

You can meet this figure in the street, and live, and even smile at the recollection. But conceive of her in a ballroom, with the bare, brawny arms that she invariably displays there, and all the other corresponding development,

such as is beautiful in the maiden blossom, but a spectacle to howl at in such an overblown cabbage-rose as this.

Yet, somewhere in this enormous bulk there must be hidden the modest, slender, violet-nature of a girl, whom an alien mass of earthliness has unkindly overgrown; for an English maiden in her teens, though very seldom so pretty as our own damsels, possesses, to say the truth, a certain charm of half-blossom, and delicately folded leaves, and tender womanhood, shielded by maidenly reserves, with which, somehow or other, our American girls often fail to adorn themselves during an appreciable moment. It is a pity that the English violet should grow into such an outrageously developed peony as I have attempted to describe. I wonder whether a middle-aged husband ought to be considered as legally married to all the accretions that have overgrown the slenderness of his bride, since he led her to the altar, and which make her so much more than he ever bargained for! Is it not a sounder view of the case that the matrimonial bond cannot be held to include the three-fourths of the wife that had no existence when the ceremony was performed? And ought not an English married pair to insist upon the celebration of a silver wedding at the end of twenty-five years to legalize all that corporeal growth of which both parties have individually come into possession since pronounced one flesh?—*Our Old Home.*

THE POSTER GIRL

The blessed Poster Girl leaned out
From a pinky-purple heaven;
One eye was red and one was green;
Her bang was cut uneven;
She had three fingers on her hand,
And the hairs on her head were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No sunflowers did adorn;
But a heavy Turkish portière
Was very neatly worn;
And the hat that lay along her back
Was yellow like canned corn.

It was a kind of wobbly wave
That she was standing on,
And high aloft she flung a scarf
That must have weighed a ton;
And she was rather tall—at least
She reached up to the sun.

She curved and writhed, and then she said
Less green of speech than blue:
"Perhaps I *am* absurd—perhaps
I *don't* appeal to you;
But my artistic worth depends
Upon the point of view."

The Poster Girl

I saw her smile, although her eyes
Were only smudgy smears;
And then she swished her swirling arms,
And wagged her gorgeous ears,
She sobbed a blue-and-green-checked sob,
And wept some purple tears.

CAROLYN WELLS.

JAMES GARDNER SANDERSON

THE CONUNDRUM OF THE GOLF LINKS

(With thanks to Kipling)

WHEN the flush of the new-born sun fell first on
Eden's gold and green,
Our Father Adam sat under the Tree and shaved
his driver clean,
And joyously whirled it round his head and
knocked the apples off,
Till the Devil whispered behind the leaves:
"Well done—but is it golf?"

Wherefore he called his wife and fled to practise
again his swing—
The first of the world who foozled his stroke (yet
the grandpapa of Tyng);
And he left his clubs to the use of his sons—and
that was a glorious gain,
When the Devil chuckled "Beastly Golf" in the
ear of the horrored Cain.

They putted and drove in the North and South;
they talked and laid links in the West;
Till the waters rose o'er Ararat's tees, and the
aching wrists could rest—

Could rest till that blank, blank canvasback,
heard the Devil jeer and scoff,
As he flew with the flood-fed olive branch, "Dry
weather. Let's play golf."

They pulled and sliced and pounded the earth,
and the balls went sailing off
Into bunkers and trees while the Devil grinned,
"Keep your eye on it! *That's* not golf."
Then the Devil took his sulphured cleik and
mightily he swung,
While each man marveled and cursed his form
and each in an alien tongue.

The tale is as old as the Eden Tree—and new as
the newest green,
For each man knows ere his lip thatch grows the
caddy's mocking mien.
And each man hears, though the ball falls fair,
the Devil's cursed cough
Of joy as the man holes out in ten, "You did
it—but what poor golf!"

We have learned to whittle the Eden Tree to
the shape of a niblick's shaft,
We have learned to make a mashie with a
wondrous handicraft,
We know that a hazard is often played best by
re-driving off,
But the Devil whoops as he whooped of old, "It's
easy, but is it golf?"

When the flicker of summer falls faint on the
Clubroom's gold and greer,
The sons of Adam sit them down and boast of
strokes unseen;
They talk of stymies and brassie lies to the tune
of the steward's cough,
But the Devil whispers in their ears, "Gadzooks!
But that's not golf!"

Now if we could win to the Eden Tree where
the Nine-Mile Links are laid,
And seat ourselves where Man first swore as he
drove from the grateful shade,
And if we could play where our Fathers played
and follow our swings well through,
By the favor of God we might know of Golf
what our Father Adam knew.

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE

THE MINISTER'S WOOING

"WAL, the upshot on't was, they fussed and fuzzled and wuzzled till they'd drinked up all the tea in the teapot; and then they went down and called on the Parson, and wuzzled him all up talkin' about this, that, and t'other that wanted lookin' to, and that it was no way to leave everything to a young chit like Huldy, and that he ought to be lookin' about for an experienced woman.

"The Parson, he thanked 'em kindly, and said he believed their motives was good, but he didn't go no further.

"He didn't ask Mis' Pipperidge to come and stay there and help him, nor nothin' o' that kind; but he said he'd attend to matters himself. The fact was, the Parson had got such a likin' for havin' Huldy 'round that he couldn't think o' such a thing as swappin' her off for the Widder Pipperidge.

"'But,' he thought to himself, 'Huldy is a good girl; but I oughtn't to be a-leavin' everything to her—it's too hard on her. I ought to be instructin' and guidin' and helpin' of her; 'cause 'tain't everybody could be expected to know and do what Mis' Carryl did'; and so at

it he went; and Lordy massy! didn't Huldy hev a time on't when the minister began to come out of his study and wanted to ten' 'round an' see to things? Huldy, you see, thought all the world of the minister, and she was 'most afraid to laugh; but she told me she couldn't, for the life of her, help it when his back was turned, for he wuzzled things up in the most singular way. But Huldy, she'd just say, 'Yes, sir,' and get him off into his study, and go on her own way.

"'Huldy,' says the minister one day, 'you ain't experienced outdoors; and when you want to know anything you must come to me.'

"'Yes, sir,' said Huldy.

"'Now, Huldy,' says the Parson, 'you must be sure to save the turkey eggs, so that we can have a lot of turkeys for Thanksgiving.'

"'Yes, sir,' says Huldy; and she opened the pantry door and showed him a nice dishful she'd been a-savin' up. Wal, the very next day the parson's hen-turkey was found killed up to old Jim Scrogg's barn. Folks say Scroggs killed it, though Scroggs, he stood to it he didn't; at any rate, the Scroggses they made a meal on't, and Huldy, she felt bad about it 'cause she'd set her heart on raisin' the turkeys; and says she, 'Oh, dear! I don't know what I shall do. I was just ready to set her.'

"'Do, Huldy?' says the Parson; 'why, there's the other turkey, out there by the door, and a fine bird, too, he is.'

"Sure enough, there was the old tom-turkey a-struttin' and a-sidlin' and a-quitterin', and a-floutin' his tail feathers in the sun, like a lively young widower all ready to begin life over again.

"'But,' says Huldy, 'you know *he* can't set on eggs.'

"'He can't? I'd like to know why" says the Parson. 'He *shall* set on eggs, and hatch 'em, too.'

"'Oh, Doctor!' says Huldy, all in a tremble; 'cause, you know, she didn't want to contradict the minister, and she was afraid she should laugh—'I never heard that a tom-turkey would set on eggs.'

"'Why, they ought to,' said the Parson getting quite 'arnest. 'What else be they good for? You just bring out the eggs, now, and put 'em in the nest, and I'll make him set on 'em.'

"So Huldy, she thought there weren't no way to convince him but to let him try; so she took the eggs out and fixed 'em all nice in the nest; and then she come back and found old Tom a-skirmishin' with the Parson pretty lively, I tell ye. Ye see, old Tom, he didn't take the idea at all; and he flopped and gobbled, and fit the Parson; and the Parson's wig got 'round so that his cue stuck straight out over his ear, but he'd got his blood up. Ye see, the old Doctor was used to carryin' his p'ints o' doctrine; and he hadn't fit the Arminians and Socinians to be

beat by a tom-turkey; and finally he made a dive and ketched him by the neck in spite o' his floppin', and stroked him down, and put Huldy's apron 'round him.

"'There, Huldy,' he says, quite red in the face, 'we've got him now'; and he traveled off to the barn with him as lively as a cricket.

"Huldy came behind, just chokin' with laugh, and afraid the minister would look 'round and see her.

"'Now, Huldy, we'll crook his legs and set him down,' says the Parson, when they got him to the nest; 'you see, he is getting quiet, and he'll set there all right.'

"And the Parson, he sot him down; and old Tom, he sot there solemn enough and held his head down all droopin', lookin' like a rail pious old cock as long as the Parson sot by him.

"'There; you see how still he sets,' says the Parson to Huldy.

"Huldy was 'most dyin' for fear she should laugh. 'I'm afraid he'll get up,' says she, 'when you do.'

"'Oh, no, he won't!' says the Parson, quite confident. 'There, there,' says he, layin' his hands on him as if pronouncin' a blessin'.

"But when the Parson riz up, old Tom he riz up, too, and began to march over the eggs.

"'Stop, now!' says the Parson. 'I'll make him get down agin; hand me that corn-basket; we'll put that over him.'

"So he crooked old Tom's legs and got him

down agin; and they put the corn-basket over him, and then they both stood and waited.

"'That'll do the thing, Huldy,' said the Parson.

"'I don't know about it,' says Huldy.

"'Oh, yes, it will, child; I understand,' says he.

"Just as he spoke, the basket riz up and stood, and they could see old Tom's long legs.

"'I'll make him stay down, confound him,' says the Parson, for you see, parsons is men, like the rest on us, and the Doctor had got his spunk up.

"'You jist hold him a minute, and I'll get something that'll make him stay, I guess; and out he went to the fence and brought in a long, thin, flat stone, and laid it on old Tom's back.

"'Oh, my eggs!' says Huldy. 'I'm afraid he's smashed 'em!'

"And sure enough, there they was, smashed flat enough under the stone.

"'I'll have him killed,' said the Parson. 'We won't have such a critter 'round.'

"Wal. next week, Huldy, she jist borrowed the minister's horse and side-saddle and rode over to South Parish to her Aunt Bascome's—Widder Bascome's, you know, that lives there by the trout-brook—and got a lot o' turkey eggs o' her, and come back and set a hen on 'em, and said nothin'; and in good time there was as nice a lot o' turkey-chicks as ever ye see.

"Huldy never said a word to the minister

about his experiment, and he never said a word to her; but he sort o' kep more to his books and didn't take it on him to advise so much.

"But not long arter he took it into his head that Huldy ought to have a pig to be a-fattin' with the buttermilk.

"Mis' Pipperidge set him up to it; and jist then old Tom Bigelow, out to Juniper Hill, told him if he'd call over he'd give him a little pig.

"So he sent for a man, and told him to build a pig-pen right out by the well, and have it all ready when he came home with his pig.

"Huldy said she wished he might put a curb round the well out there, because in the dark sometimes a body might stumble into it; and the Parson said he might do that.

"Wal, old Aikin, the carpenter, he didn't come till 'most the middle of the afternoon; and then he sort o' idled, so that he didn't get up the well-curb till sundown; and then he went off, and said he'd come and do the pig-pen next day.

"Wal, arter dark, Parson Carryl, he driv into the yard, full chizel, with his pig.

"'There, Huldy I've got you a nice little pig.'

"'Dear me!' says Huldy; 'where have you put him?'

"'Why, out there in the pig-pen, to be sure.'

"'Oh, dear me!' says Huldy, 'that s the well-curb—there ain't no pig-pen built,' says she.

"'Lordy massy!' says the Parson; 'then I've thrown the pig in the well!'

"Wal, Huldy she worked and worked, and finally she fished piggy out in the bucket, but he was as dead as a doornail; and she got him out o' the way quietly, and didn't say much; and the Parson he took to a great Hebrew book in his study.

"Arter that the Parson set sich store by Huldy that he come to her and asked her about everything, and it was amazin' how everything she put her hand to prospered. Huldy planted marigolds and larkspurs, pinks and carnations, all up and down the path to the front door; and trained up mornin'-glories and scarlet runners round the windows. And she was always gettin' a root here, and a sprig there, and a seed from somebody else; for Huldy was one o' them that has the gift, so that ef you jist give 'em the leastest of anything they make a great bush out of it right away; so that in six months Huldy had roses and geraniums and lilies sich as it would take a gardener to raise.

"Huldy was so sort o' chipper and fair spoken that she got the hired men all under her thumb: they come to her and took her orders jist as meek as so many calves, and she traded at the store, and kep' the accounts, and she had her eyes everywhere, and tied up all the ends so tight that there wa'n't no gettin' 'round her. She wouldn't let nobody put nothin' off on Parson Carryl 'cause he was a minister. Huldy was allers up to anybody that wanted to make a hard bargain, and afore he knew jist what he

was about she'd got the best end of it, and everybody said that Huldy was the most capable girl they ever traded with.

"Wal, come to the meetin' of the Association, Mis' Deakin Blodgett and Mis' Pipperidge come callin' up to the Parson's all in a stew and offerin' their services to get the house ready, but the Doctor he jist thanked 'em quite quiet, and turned 'em over to Huldy; and Huldy she told 'em that she'd got everything ready, and showed 'em her pantries, and her cakes, and her pies, and her puddin's, and took 'em all over the house; and they went peekin' and pokin', openin' cupboard doors, and lookin' into drawers; and they couldn't find so much as a thread out o' the way, from garret to cellar, and so they went off quite discontented. Arter that the women sat a new trouble a-brewin'. They began to talk that it was a year now since Mis' Carryl died; and it railly wasn't proper such a young gal to be stayin' there, who everybody could see was a-settin' her cap for the minister.

"Mis' Pipperidge said, that so long as she looked on Huldy as the hired gal she hadn't thought much about it; but Huldy was railly takin' on airs as an equal, and appearin' as mistress o' the house in a way that would make talk if it went on. And Mis' Pipperidge she driv 'round up to Deakin Abner Snow's, and down to Mis' 'Lijah Perry's, and asked them if they wasn't afraid that the way the Parson and Huldy was a-goin on might make talk. And

they said they hadn't thought on't before, but now, come to think on't it, they was sure it would and they all went and talked with somebody else and asked them if they didn't think it would make talk. So come Sunday, between meetin's there warn't nothin' else talked about; and Huldy saw folks a-noddin' and a-winkin', and a-lookin' arter her, and she begun to feel dreffu1 sort o' disagreeable. Finally Mis' Sawin, she says to her, 'My dear, didn't you never think folk would talk about you and the minister?'

"'No; why should they?' says Huldy, quite innocent.

"'Wal, dear,' says she, 'I think it's a shame; but they say you're tryin' to catch him, and that it's so bold and improper for you to be courtin' of him right in his own house—you know folks will talk—I thought I'd tell you, 'cause I think so much of you,' says she.

"Huldy was a gal of spirit, and she despised the talk, but it made her dreffu1 uncomfortable; and when she got home at night she sat down in the mornin'-glory porch, quite quiet, and didn't sing a word.

"The minister he had heard the same thing from one of his deakins that day; and when he saw Huldy so kind o' silent, he says to her, 'Why don't you sing, my child?'

"He had a pleasant sort o' way with him, the minister had, and Huldy had got to likin' to be with him; and it all come over her that perhaps she ought to go away; and her throat

kind o' filled up so she couldn't hardly speak; and, says she, 'I can't sing to-night.'

"Says he, 'You don't know how much good your singin' has done me, nor how much good you have done me in all ways, Huldy. I wish I knew how to show my gratitude.'

"'Oh, sir!' says Huldy, '*is* it improper for me to be here?'

"'No, dear,' says the minister, 'but ill-natured folks will talk; but there is one way we can stop it, Huldy—if you'll marry me. You'll make me very happy, and I'll do all I can to make you happy. Will you?'

"Wal, Huldy never told me just what she said to the minister; gals never does give you the particulars of them things jist as you'd like 'em—only I know the upshot and the hull on't was, that Huldy she did a considerable lot o' clear starchin' and ironin' the next two days, and the Friday o' next week the minister and she rode over together to Doctor Lothrop's, in Oldtown, and the Doctor he jist made 'em man and wife."

WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS

MRS. JOHNSON

It was on a morning of the lovely New England May that we left the horse-car and, spreading our umbrellas, walked down the street to our new home in Charlesbridge, through a storm of snow and rain so finely blent by the influences of this fortunate climate that no flake knew itself from its sister drop, or could be better identified by the people against whom they beat in unison. A vernal gale from the east fanned our cheeks and pierced our marrow and chilled our blood, while the raw, cold green of the adventurous grass on the borders of the sopping sidewalks gave, as it peered through its veil of melting snow and freezing rain, a peculiar cheerfulness to the landscape. Here and there in the vacant lots abandoned hoopskirts defied decay; and near the half-finished wooden houses empty mortar-beds and bits of lath and slate, strewn over the scarred and mutilated ground, added their interest to the scene. . . .

This heavenly weather, which the Pilgrim Fathers, with the idea of turning their thoughts effectually from earthly pleasures, came so far to discover, continued with slight amelioration throughout the month of May and far into

June; and it was a matter of constant amazement with one who had known less austere climates, to behold how vegetable life struggled with the hostile skies, and, in an atmosphere as chill and damp as that of a cellar, shot forth the buds and blossoms upon the pear trees, called out the sour Puritan courage of the currant-bushes, taught a reckless native grapevine to wander and wanton over the southern side of the fence, and decked the banks with violets as fearless and as fragile as New England girls, so that about the end of June, when the heavens relented and the sun blazed out at last, there was little for him to do but to redden and darken the daring fruits that had attained almost their full growth without his countenance.

Then, indeed, Charlesbridge appeared to us a kind of paradise. The wind blew all day from the southwest, and all day in the grove across the way the orioles sang to their nestlings. . . . The house was almost new and in perfect repair; and, better than all, the kitchen had as yet given no signs of unrest in those volcanic agencies which are constantly at work there, and which, with sudden explosions, make Herculaneums and Pompeiis of so many smiling households. Breakfast, dinner and tea came up with illusive regularity, and were all the most perfect of their kind; and we laughed and feasted in our vain security. We had out from the city to banquet with us the friends we loved, and we were inexpressibly proud before

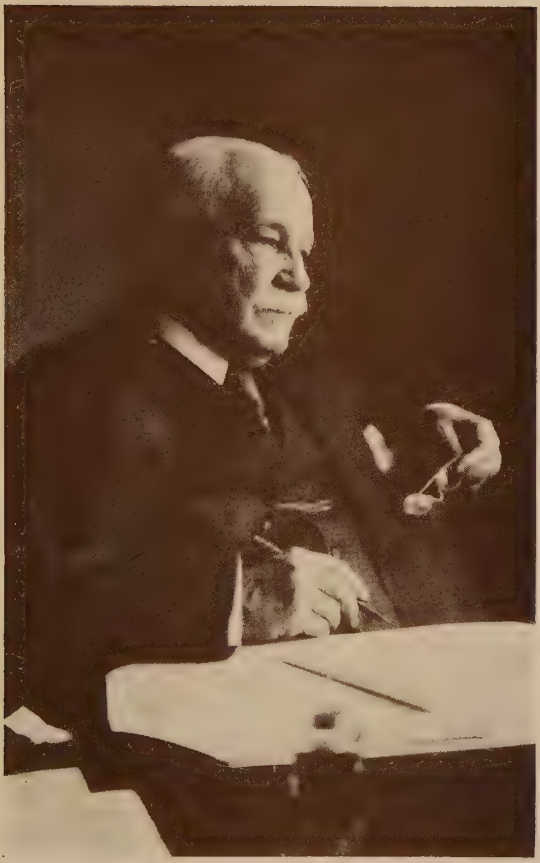
them of the help who first wrought miracles of cookery in our honor, and then appeared in a clean white apron and the glossiest black hair to wait upon the table. She was young and certainly very pretty; she was as gay as a lark, and was courted by a young man whose clothes would have been a credit, if they had not been a reproach, to our lowly basement. She joyfully assented to the idea of staying with us till she married.

In fact, there was much that was extremely pleasant about the little place when the warm weather came, and it was not wonderful to us that Jenny was willing to remain. It was very quiet; we called one another to the window if a large dog went by our door; and whole days passed without the movement of any wheels but the butcher's upon our street, which flourished in ragweed and buttercups and daisies, and in the autumn burned, like the borders of nearly all the streets in Charlesbridge, with the pallid azure flame of the succory. The neighborhood was in all things a frontier between city and country. The horse-cars, the type of such civilization—full of imposture, discomfort, and sublime possibility—as we yet possess, went by the head of our street, and might, perhaps, be available to one skilled in calculating the movements of comets; while two minutes' walk would take us into a wood so wild and thick that no roof was visible through the trees. We learned, like innocent pastoral people of

the golden age, to know the several voices of the cows pastured in the vacant lot, and, like engine-drivers of the iron-age, to distinguish the different whistles of the locomotives passing on the neighboring railroad. . . .

We played a little at gardening, of course, and planted tomatoes, which the chickens seemed to like, for they ate them up as fast as they ripened; and we watched with pride the growth of our Lawton blackberries, which, after attaining the most stalwart proportions, were still as bitter as the scrubbiest of their savage brethren, and which, when by advice left on the vines for a week after they turned black, were silently gorged by secret and gluttonous flocks of robins and orioles. As for our grapes, the frost cut them off in the hour of their triumph.

So, as I have hinted, we were not surprised that Jenny should be willing to remain with us, and were as little prepared for her desertion as for any other change of our mortal state. But one day in September she came to her nominal mistress with tears in her beautiful eyes and protestations of unexampled devotion upon her tongue, and said that she was afraid she must leave us. She liked the place, and she never had worked for anyone that was more of a lady, but she had made up her mind to go into the city. All this, so far, was quite in the manner of domestics who, in ghost stories, give warning to the occupants of haunted houses; and Jenny's mistress listened in suspense for the motive o:



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WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS

her desertion, expecting to hear no less than that it was something which walked up and down the stairs and dragged iron links after it, or something that came and groaned at the front door, like populace dissatisfied with a political candidate. But it was in fact nothing of this kind; simply, there were no lamps upon our street, and Jenny, after spending Sunday evenings with friends in East Charlesbridge, was always alarmed on her return in walking from the horse-car to our door. The case was hopeless, and Jenny and our household parted with respect and regret.

We had not before this thought it a grave disadvantage that our street was unlighted. Our street was not drained nor graded; no municipal cart ever came to carry away our ashes; there was not a water-butt within half a mile to save us from fire, nor more than the one-thousandth part of a policeman to protect us from theft. Yet, as I paid a heavy tax, I somehow felt that we enjoyed the benefits of city government, and never looked upon Charlesbridge as in any way undesirable for residence. But when it became necessary to find help in Jenny's place, the frosty welcome given to application at the intelligence offices renewed a painful doubt awakened by her departure. To be sure, the heads of the offices were polite enough; but when the young housekeeper had stated her case at the first to which she applied, and the Intelligencer had called

out to the invisible expectants in the adjoining room, "Anny wan wants to do giner'l housewark in Charlsbrudge?" there came from the maids invoked so loud, so fierce, so full a "No!" as shook the lady's heart with an indescribable shame and dread. The name that, with an innocent pride in its literary and historical associations, she had written at the heads of her letters, was suddenly become a matter of reproach to her; and she was almost tempted to conceal thereafter that she lived in Charlesbridge, and to pretend that she dwelt upon some wretched little street in Boston. "You see," said the head of the office, "the gairls doesn't like to live so far away from the city. Now, if it was on'y in the Port." . . .

This pen is not graphic enough to give the remote reader an idea of the affront offered to an inhabitant of Old Charlesbridge in these closing words. Neither am I of sufficiently tragic mood to report here all the sufferings undergone by an unhappy family in finding servants, or to tell how the winter was passed with miserable makeshifts. Alas! is it not the history of a thousand experiences? Anyone who looks upon this page could match it with a tale as full of heartbreak and disaster, while I conceive that, in hastening to speak of Mrs. Johnson, I approach a subject of unique interest. . . .

I say our last Irish girl went with the last snow, and on one of those midsummerlike days

that sometimes fall in early April to our yet bleak and desolate zone, our hearts sang of Africa and golden joys. A Libyan longing took us, and we would have chosen, if we could, to bear a strand of grotesque beads, or a handful of brazen gauds, and traffic them for some sable maid with crisp locks, whom, uncoffling from the captive train beside the desert, we should make to do our general housework forever, through the right of lawful purchase. But we knew that this was impossible, and that if we desired colored help we must seek it at the intelligence office, which is in one of those streets chiefly inhabited by the orphaned children and grandchildren of slavery. To tell the truth, these orphans do not seem to grieve much for their bereavement, but lead a life of joyous and rather indolent oblivion in their quarter of the city. They are often to be seen sauntering up and down the street by which the Charlesbridge cars arrive—the young with a harmless swagger and the old with the generic limp which our Autocrat has already noted as attending advanced years in their race. . . . How gaily are the young ladies of this race attired, as they trip up and down the sidewalks, and in and out through the pendant garments at the shop doors! They are the black pansies and marigolds, and dark-blooded dahlias among womankind. They try to assume something of our colder race's demeanor, but even the passer on the horse-car can see that it is not native

with them, and is better pleased when they forget us, and ungenteely laugh in encountering friends, letting their white teeth glitter through the generous lips that open to their ears In the streets branching upward from this avenue, very little colored men and maids play with broken or enfeebled toys, or sport on the wooden pavements of the entrances to the inner courts. Now and then a colored soldier or sailor—looking strange in his uniform even after the custom of several years—emerges from those passages; or, more rarely, a black gentleman, stricken in years, and cased in shining broadcloth, walks solidly down the brick sidewalk, cane in hand—a vision of serene self-complacency and so plainly the expression of virtuous public sentiment that the great colored louts, innocent enough till then in their idleness, are taken with a sudden sense of depravity, and loaf guiltily up against the house-walls. At the same moment, perhaps, a young damsel, amorously scuffling with an admirer through one of the low open windows, suspends the strife, and bids him—"Go along, now, do!" More rarely yet than the gentleman described, one may see a white girl among the dark neighbors, whose frowsy head is uncovered, and whose sleeves are rolled up to her elbows, and who, though no doubt quite at home, looks as strange there as that pale anomaly which may sometimes be seen among a crew of blackbirds.

An air not so much of decay as of unthrif-

and yet hardly of unthrift, seems to prevail in the neighborhood, which has none of the aggressive and impudent squalor of an Irish quarter and none of the surly wickedenss of a low American street. A gaiety not born of the things that bring its serious joy to the true New England heart—a ragged gaiety, which comes of summer in the blood, and not in the pocket or the conscience, and which affects the countenance and the whole demeanor, setting the feet to some inward music, and at times bursting into a line of song or a childlike and irresponsible laugh—gives tone to the visible life and wakens a very friendly spirit in the passer, who somehow thinks there of a milder climate, and is half persuaded that the orange-peel on the sidewalks came from fruit grown in the soft atmosphere of those back courts.

It was in this quarter, then, that we heard of Mrs. Johnson; and it was from a colored boarding-house there that she came to Charlesbridge to look at us, bringing her daughter of twelve years with her. She was a matron of mature age and portly figure, with a complexion like coffee soothed with the richest cream; and her manners were so full of a certain tranquillity and grace that she charmed away all our will to ask for references. It was only her barbaric laughter and lawless eye that betrayed how slightly her New England birth and breeding covered her ancestral traits, and bridged the gulf of a thousand years of civilization that lay

between her race and ours. But in fact, she was doubly estranged by descent; for, as we learned later, a sylvan wilderness mixed with that of the desert in her veins; her grandfather was an Indian, and her ancestors on this side had probably sold their lands for the same value in trinkets that bought the original African pair on the other side.

The first day that Mrs. Johnson descended into our kitchen she conjured from the malicious disorder in which it had been left by the flitting Irish kobold a dinner that revealed the inspirations of genius, and was quite different from a dinner of mere routine and laborious talent. Something original and authentic mingled with the accustomed flavors; and, though vague reminiscences of canal-boat travel and woodland camps arose from the relish of certain of the dishes, there was yet the assurance of such power in the preparation of the whole that we knew her to be merely running over the chords of our appetite with preliminary savors, as a musician acquaints his touch with the keys of an unfamiliar piano before breaking into brilliant and triumphant execution. Within a week she had mastered her instrument, and thereafter there was no faltering in her performances, which she varied constantly, through inspiration or from suggestion. . . . But, after all, it was in puddings that Mrs. Johnson chiefly excelled. She was one of those cooks—rare as men of genius in literature—who love their

own dishes; and she had, in her personally childlike simplicity of taste and the inherited appetites of her savage forefathers, a dominant passion for sweets. So far as we could learn, she subsisted principally upon puddings and tea. Through the same primitive instincts, no doubt, she loved praise. She openly exulted in our artless flatteries of her skill; she waited jealously at the head of the kitchen stairs to hear what was said of her work, especially if there were guests; and she was never too weary to attempt emprises of cookery

While engaged in these, she wore a species of sightly handkerchief like a turban upon her head, and about her person those mystical swathings in which old ladies of the African race delight. But she most pleasured our sense of beauty and moral fitness when, after the last pan was washed and the last pot was scraped, she lighted a potent pipe, and, taking her stand at the kitchen door, laded the soft evening air with its pungent odors. If we surprised her at these supreme moments, she took the pipe from her lips and put it behind her, with a low, mellow chuckle and a look of half-defiant consciousness, never guessing that none of her merits took us half so much as the cheerful vice which she only feigned to conceal.

Some things she could not do so perfectly as cooking because of her failing eyesight, and we persuaded her that spectacles would both become and befriend a lady of her years, and so

bought her a pair of steel-bowed glasses. She wore them in some great emergencies at first, but had clearly no pride in them. Before long she laid them aside altogether, and they had passed from our thoughts, when one day we heard her mellow note of laughter and her daughter's harsher cackle outside our door, and, opening it, beheld Mrs. Johnson in gold-bowed spectacles of massive frame. We then learned that their purchase was in fulfilment of a vow made long ago, in the lifetime of Mr. Johnson, that if ever she wore glasses, they should be gold-bowed; and I hope the manes of the dead were half as happy in these votive spectacles as the simple soul that offered them.

She and her late partner were the parents of eleven children, some of whom were dead and some of whom were wanderers in unknown parts. During his lifetime she had kept a little shop in her native town, and it was only within a few years that she had gone into service. She cherished a natural haughtiness of spirit, and resented control, although disposed to do all she could of her own notion. Being told to say when she wanted an afternoon, she explained that when she wanted an afternoon she always took it without asking, but always planned so as not to discommode the ladies with whom she lived. These, she said, had numbered twenty-seven within three years, which made us doubt the success of her system in all cases, though she merely held out the fact as an assurance of her

faith in the future, and a proof of the ease with which places are to be found. She contended, moreover, that a lady who had for thirty years had a house of her own was in nowise bound to ask permission to receive visits from friends where she might be living, but that they ought freely to come and go like other guests. In this spirit she once invited her son-in-law, Professor Jones, of Providence, to dine with her; and her defied mistress, on entering the dining-room found the Professor at pudding and tea there—an impressively respectable figure in black clothes, with a black face rendered yet more effective by a pair of green goggles. It appeared that this dark professor was a light of phrenology in Rhode Island, and that he was believed to have uncommon virtue in his science by reason of being blind as well as black.

I am loath to confess that Mrs. Johnson had not a flattering opinion of the Caucasian race in all respects. In fact, she had very good philosophical and scriptural reasons for looking upon us as an upstart people of new blood, who had come into their whiteness by no creditable or pleasant process. The late Mr. Johnson, who had died in the West Indies, whither he voyaged for his health in quality of a cook upon a Down East schooner, was a man of letters, and had written a book to show the superiority of the black over the white branches of the human family. In this he held that, as all islands have been at their first discovery found

peopled by blacks, we must needs believe that humanity was first created of that color. Mrs. Johnson could not show us her husband's work (a sole copy in the library of an English gentleman at Port au Prince is not to be bought for money), but she often developed its arguments to the lady of the house; and one day, with a great show of reluctance and many protests that no personal slight was meant, let fall the fact that Mr. Johnson believed the white race descended from Gehaz the leper, upon whom the leprosy of Naaman fell when the latter returned by divine favor to his original blackness. "And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow," said Mrs. Johnson, quoting irrefutable Scripture. "Leprosy, leprosy," she added thoughtfully—"nothing but leprosy bleached you out."

It seems to me much in her praise that she did not exult in our taint and degradation, as some white philosophers used to do in the opposite idea that a part of the human family were cursed to lasting blackness and slavery in Ham and his children, but even told us of a remarkable approach to whiteness in many of her own offspring. In a kindred spirit of charity no doubt, she refused ever to attend church with people of her elder and wholesomer blood. When she went to church, she said, she always went to a white church, though while with us I am bound to say she never went to any. She professed to read her Bible in her bedroom on

Sundays; but we suspected from certain sounds and odors which used to steal out of this sanctuary, that her piety more commonly found expression in dozing and smoking.

I would not make a wanton jest here of Mrs. Johnson's anxiety to claim honor for the African color, while denying this color in many of her own family. It afforded a glimpse of the pain with which all her people must endure, however proudly they hide it or light-heartedly forget it, from the despite and contumely to which they are guiltlessly born; and when I thought how irreparable was this disgrace and calamity of a black skin, and how irreparable it must be for ages yet, in this world where every other chance and all manner of wilful guilt and wickedness may hope for covert and pardon, I had little heart to laugh. Indeed, it was so pathetic to hear this poor old soul talk of her dead and lost ones, and try, in spite of all Mr. Johnson's theories and her own arrogant generalizations to establish their whiteness, that we must have been very cruel and silly people to turn their sacred fables even into matter of question. I have no doubt that her Antoinette Anastasia and her Thomas Jefferson Wilberforce—it is impossible to give a full idea of the splendor and scope of the baptismal names in Mrs. Johnson's family—have as light skins and as golden hair in heaven as her reverend maternal fancy painted for them in our world. There, certainly, they would not be subject to tanning, which had ruined the

delicate complexion, and had knotted into black woolly tangles the once wavy blond locks of our little maid-servant Naomi; and I would fain believe that Toussaint Washington Johnson, who ran away to sea so many years ago, has found some fortunate zone where his hair and skin keep the same sunny and rosy tints they wore to his mother's eyes in infancy. But I have no means of knowing this, or of telling whether he was the prodigy of intellect that he was declared to be. Naomi could no more be taken in proof of the one assertion than of the other. When she came to us, it was agreed that she should go to school; but she overruled her mother in this as in everything else, and never went. Except Sunday-school lessons, she had no other instructions than that her mistress gave her in the evenings, when a heavy day's play and the natural influences of the hour conspired with original causes to render her powerless before words of one syllable.

The first week of her services she was obedient and faithful to her duties; but, relaxing in the atmosphere of a house which seems to demoralize all menials, she shortly fell into disorderly ways of lying in wait for callers out of doors, and, when people rang, of running up the front steps and letting them in from the outside. As the season expanded, and the fine weather became confirmed, she spent her time in the fields, appearing at the house only when nature importunately craved molasses.

In her untamable disobedience, Naomi alone betrayed her sylvan blood, for she was in all other respects Negro and not Indian. But it was of her aboriginal ancestry that Mrs. Johnson chiefly boasted—when not engaged in argument to maintain the superiority of the African race. She loved to descant upon it as the cause and explanation of her own arrogant habit of feeling; and she seemed, indeed, to have inherited something of the Indian's *hauteur* along with the Ethiop's subtle cunning and abundant amiability. She gave many instances in which her pride had met and overcome the insolence of employers, and the kindly old creature was by no means singular in her pride of being reputed proud.

She could never have been a woman of strong logical faculties, but she had in some things a very surprising and awful astuteness. She seldom introduced any purpose directly, but bore all about it, and then suddenly sprung it upon her unprepared antagonist. At other times she obscurely hinted a reason, and left a conclusion to be inferred; as when she warded off reproach for some delinquency by saying in a general way that she had lived with ladies who used to come scolding into the kitchen after they had taken their bitters. "Quality ladies took their bitters regular," she added, to remove any sting of personality from her remark; for, from many things she had let fall, we knew that she did not regard us as quality. On the

contrary, she often tried to overbear us with the gentility of her former places; and would tell the lady over whom she reigned that she had lived with folks worth their three and four hundred thousand dollars, who never complained as she did of the ironing. Yet she had a sufficient regard for the literary occupations of the family, Mr. Johnson having been an author. She even professed to have herself written a book, which was still in manuscript and preserved somewhere among her best clothes.

It was well, on many accounts, to be in contact with a mind so original and suggestive as Mrs. Johnson's. We loved to trace its intricate yet often transparent operations, and were perhaps too fond of explaining its peculiarities by facts of ancestry—of finding hints of the Pow-wow of the Grand Custom in each grotesque development. We were conscious of something warmer in this old soul than in ourselves, and sometimes wilder, and we chose to think it the tropic and the untracked forest. She had scarcely any being apart from her affection; she had no morality, but was good because she neither hated nor envied; and she might have been a saint far more easily than far more civilized people.

There was that also in her sinuous yet malleable nature, so full of guile and so full of goodness, that reminded us pleasantly of lowly folks in elder lands, where relaxing oppressions have lifted the restraints of fear between master

and servant without disturbing the familiarity of their relation. She advised freely with us upon all household matters, and took a motherly interest in whatever concerned us. She could be flattered or caressed into almost any service, but no threat or command could move her. When she erred, she never acknowledged her wrong in words, but handsomely expressed her regrets in a pudding or sent up her apologies in a favorite dish secretly prepared. We grew so well used to this form of exculpation that, whenever Mrs. Johnson took an afternoon at an inconvenient season, we knew that for a week afterward we should be feasted like princes. She owned frankly that she loved us, that she never had done half so much for people before, and that she never had been nearly so well suited in any other place; and for a brief and happy time we thought that we never should be obliged to part.

One day, however, our dividing destiny appeared in the basement, and was presented to us as Hippolyto Thucydides, the son of Mrs. Johnson, who had just arrived on a visit to his mother from the State of New Hampshire. He was a heavy and loutish youth, standing upon the borders of boyhood, and looking forward to the future with a vacant and listless eye. I mean this was his figurative attitude; his actual manner, as he lolled upon a chair beside the kitchen window, was so eccentric that we felt a little uncertain how to regard him, and Mrs.

Johnson openly described him as peculiar. He was so deeply tanned by the fervid suns of the New Hampshire winter, and his hair had so far suffered from the example of the sheep lately under his charge, that he could not be classed by any stretch of compassion with the blond and straight-haired members of Mrs. Johnson's family.

He remained with us all the first day until late in the afternoon, when his mother took him out to get him a boarding-house. Then he departed in the van of her and Naomi, pausing at the gate to collect his spirits, and, after he had sufficiently animated himself by clapping his palms together, starting off down the street at a hand-gallop, to the manifest terror of the cows in the pasture and the confusion of the less demonstrative people of our household. Other characteristic traits appeared in Hippolyto Thucydides within no very long period of time, and he ran away from his lodgings so often during the summer that he might be said to board round among the outlying cornfields and turnip patches of Charlesbridge. As a check upon this habit, Mrs. Johnson seemed to have invited him to spend his whole time in our basement; for whenever we went below we found him there, balanced—perhaps in homage to us, and perhaps as a token of extreme sensibility in himself—upon the low window-sill, the bottoms of his boots touching the floor inside, and his face buried in the grass without.

We could formulate no very tenable objection to all this, and yet the presence of Thucydides in our kitchen unaccountably oppressed our imaginations. We beheld him all over the house, a monstrous eidolon, balanced upon every window-sill; and he certainly attracted unpleasant notice to our place, no less by his furtive and hang-dog manner of arrival than by the bold displays with which he celebrated his departures. We hinted this to Mrs. Johnson, but she could not enter into our feeling. Indeed, all the wild poetry of her maternal and primitive nature seemed to cast itself about this hapless boy; and if we had listened to her we should have believed that there was no one so agreeable in society, or so quickwitted in affairs, as Hippolyto, when he chose. . . .

At last, when we said positively that Thucydides should come to us no more, and then qualified the prohibition by allowing him to come every Sunday, she answered that she never would hurt the child's feelings by telling him not to come where his mother was; that people who did not love her children did not love her; and that, if Hippy went, she went. We thought it a masterpiece of firmness to rejoin that Hippolyto must go in any event, but I am bound to own that he did not go, and that his mother stayed, and so fed us with every cunning, propitiatory dainty, that we must have been Pagans to renew our threat. In fact, we begged Mrs. Johnson to go into the

country with us, and she, after long reluctation on Hippy's account, consented, agreeing to send him away to friends during her absence.

We made every preparation, and on the eve of our departure Mrs. Johnson went into the city to engage her son's passage to Bangor, while we awaited her return in untroubled security.

But she did not appear until midnight, and then responded with but a sad "Well, sah!" to the cheerful "Well, Mrs. Johnson!" that greeted her.

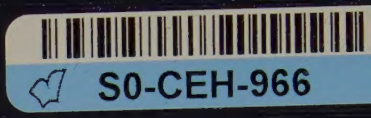
"All right, Mrs. Johnson?"

Mrs. Johnson made a strange noise, half chuckle and half death-rattle in her throat. "All wrong, sah. Hippy's off again; and I've been all over the city after him."

"Then you can't go with us in the morning?"

"How *can* I, sah?"

Mrs. Johnson went sadly out of the room. Then she came back to the door again, and opening it, uttered, for the first time in our service, words of apology and regret: "I hope I ha'n't put you out any. I *wanted* to go with you, but I ought to *knowed* I couldn't. All is, I loved you too much."—*Suburban Sketches.*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